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A BAKER'S DOZEN.

1872

ORIGINAL
HUMOROUS DIALOGUES.

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1872

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BY

GEORGE M. BAKER,

"AMATEUR DRAMAS," "THE MIMIC STAGE,"
"THE SOCIAL STAGE," ETC.



BOSTON:
LEE AND SHEPARD.

1872.

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Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1872,
By GEORGE M. BAKER,
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

Stereotyped at the Boston Stereotype Foundry,
No. 19 Spring Lane.

ms. B. 1. 6, 1912.

The Thirteen Dialogues in this book were published in Oliver Optic's Magazine. They have been revised by the author, and are issued in their present form for greater convenience. They can be used for School Exhibitions or Private Theatricals, on a platform, or with the accessories of scenery and costumes. Some are, designed for very young folks, while others have been performed, with great success, by older people, in amateur theatricals. Their length and variety of characters make them very desirable for laughable after-pieces.



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THE THIEF OF TIME.

CHARACTERS.

JOHN RAY,
CHARLEY CHEERFUL, } School-boys.
RALPH READY, }
MR. HANKS, a Deaf Gentleman.
JOHN CLOD, a Countryman.
PATSY FLINN, an Irishman.

SCENE. — *A Quiet Place in the Country.*

Enter RALPH READY, R., *with School-books.*

Ralph. Twenty minutes of nine. I can take it easy this morning. How glad I am I staid at home last night and studied "Spartacus." It's Declamation Day, and I want to win the highest mark. If I fail, it will not be for want of study. I believe I'm all right. (*Declaims.*)

"Ye call me chief —" *

Enter CHARLEY CHEERFUL, L.

Charley. (*Clapping his hands.*) Bravo! Bravo! Spartacus. "They do well to call *you* chief!" number one in arithmetic, history, and geography; and to-day I've no doubt we shall call you number one in declamation.

* The dialogue can be lengthened, if necessary, by allowing Charley and Ralph to declaim the whole of their pieces.

Ralph. Ah, Charley, glad to see you. Are you all ready for the contest?

Charley. Yes, Ralph. (*Declaims.*)

“Again to the battle, Achaians;
Our hearts bid the tyrants defiance.”

Ralph. I see “a foeman worthy of my steel.” Well, Charley, good luck to you.

Charley. The same to you. I believe we are about equally matched. I want to take the highest mark, but if I am to be defeated, there’s no one to whom I’d sooner surrender the “victor’s laurels” than to you.

Ralph. And I can heartily say the same of you; but we must both look out. John Ray told the boys yesterday he was bound to have the highest mark.

Charley. I don’t fear him.

Ralph. But he’s a good declaimer, Charley.

Charley. I’ll acknowledge that; but you know he’s a terrible fellow for putting off study until the last moment. It was only yesterday morning Master Jones decided to have declamation to-day. The only time we had to prepare was yesterday noon, last night, and this morning.

Ralph. Time enough, Charley.

Charley. Certainly. But I know John Ray hasn’t employed it. Yesterday noon he went boating; last night I’m afraid he visited Hopkins’s melon patch; and this morning I saw him from my window playing ball.

Ralph. Then we’ve not much to fear from him; but here he is, puffing like a porpoise.

Enter JOHN RAY, L., with a book.

John. Hallo, boys! what’s the time?

Charley. Eighteen minutes of nine. All ready for the declamation?

John. Not yet; there's time enough.

Ralph. Time enough! What have you selected?

John. "Tell's Address." I'm going to pitch into it now. I can do it in eighteen minutes:

Charley. Why, you haven't left it till now?

John. Of course I have. Time enough, I tell you. I've got a locomotive memory, you know. None of your slow coaches. I shall only have to read it over two or three times.

Ralph. But why didn't you take it up before?

John. What's the use? I went boating yesterday; and last night I went—somewhere else.

Charley. Yes! you took a *meloncholy* walk. Hey, John?

John. What do you mean by that?

Charley. No matter. You'd better study Tell's Address, if you expect to be ready by nine o'clock.

John. So I had. Well, you run along, and let me have this place to myself. It's a quiet place. So good by. I'll see you by nine o'clock, with Tell's Address perfect.

Charley. Well, good luck to you. Come Ralph.

Ralph. I say, Ray; what's the proverb about "the thief of time"?

John. Who do you call a thief?

Ralph. A slow coach, that will rob you of your laurels spite of your locomotive memory. Come along, Charley.

[*Exeunt CHARLEY and RALPH, R.*]

John. Now, who told them I was after melons last night? (*Opens book.*) "Tell's Address." Won't I

astonish those lads ! What's the use of wasting time in study before it's needed? (*Reads.*)

“Ye crags and peaks, I'm with you once again.”

Enter MR. HANKS, L.

Mr. Hanks. Look here, boy ; where's Mr. Simmons's house?

John. O, bother ! Over by the mill.

Mr. H. Hey?

John. Over by the mill.

Mr. H. Over that hill? Good gracious ! You don't mean I've got to travel as far as that, do you, in the hot sun?

John. No, no ; it's only a little ways.

Mr. H. Only a little blaze ! It's an awful hot morning.

John. O, dear ! this old fellow is as deaf as a post. (*Very loud.*) Mr. — Simmons — lives — down — by — the — mill.

Mr. H. O, he does ! Why didn't you say so before? Down that way? (*Points R.*)

John. (*Loud.*) Yes ! To — the — right ! That — old — wooden — one — ahead !

Mr. H. Who do you call an old wooden head?

John. O, dear ! I never shall get that piece. You don't understand. I — said — wooden — house.

Mr. H. Hey?

John. O, dear ! O, dear ! (*Points R.*) That's — Mr. Simmons's — house — down — there !

Mr. H. O, yes. Thank you, thank you. I'm a little hard of hearing.

John. I see you are. Suffering from a cold?

Mr. H. Hey?

John. O, what a nuisance! Is it—from a cold you—suffer?

Mr. H. Old buffer, indeed! Be more respectful to your elders, young man; more respectful. [*Exit, R.*]

John. I've got rid of him at last, and five minutes gone. O, dear! (*Reads.*)

“Ye crags and peaks, I'm with you once again!”

Enter MR. HANKS, R.

Mr. H. Did you say right or left?

John. Good gracious! the man's back! To—the right! To the right! Follow the stream.

Mr. H. Hey?

John. Follow—the—stream—as—it—flows.

Mr. H. Follow my nose! You're an impudent scamp! I'll ask you no more questions. [*Exit, R.*]

John. I hope you won't. This comes of trying to do a good-natured act. O, dear! that address! (*Reads.*)

“Ye crags and peaks, I'm with you once again!”

Enter JOHN CLOD, L.

Clod. I say, sonny; yer hain't seen nothin' of a keow, have yer, here or hereabouts?

John. No, I haven't seen no cow.

Clod. Well, don't git mad. It's plaguy strange where that are keow has travelled tew. Brand new keow dad brought hum from market yesterday. What on airth shall I do? She's a brindle, short horns. Yeou hain't seen her?

John. No, I haven't seen her. I've seen no cows or cattle of any kind. It's no use stopping here.

Clod. Well, I dunno what's to be did. Marm, she dropped her bakin', and scooted one way; dad quit ploughin', and scooted another; and I've been scootin' every wick way. Ain't heard a keow moo — mooing, have yer?

John. I don't believe there's a cow within forty miles of here.

Clod. Sho! yer jokin' neow. Neow, see here; I kinder think yeou dew know somethin' about that keow. Jest tell me where she is, and I don't mind ginning yer fo'pence.

John. I tell you again, I know nothing about your cow. I'm studying my lesson; and if you don't clear out and leave me in peace, I shall never get it.

Clod. Sho! Well, I don't want to hender ye, but I should like to know what's become of that are keow. [Exit, R.]

John. Gone at last. Was ever a fellow so plagued! I've only got eight minutes, and I must study. (*Goes to back of stage, and walks up and down, studying.*)

Enter PATSY FLINN, L.

Patsy. Begorra, it's a foine irrant I's on ony way. It's all along iv thim wattermillons, bad luck to 'em! Slaping swately on my bid last night thinking uv the bould b'ys that fit, blid, and run away from Canady, I heerd a v'ice in the millon patch, "Here's a bouncer, b'ys." Faix, didn't I lept out uv that bid, and didn't I hurry on my clo'es, and didn't I take a big shtick, and didn't I run fur the patch, and didn't I find nobody? To

be sure I did! So this morning, Mr. Hopkins sinds me to the school-house to find the b'ys that invadid the sacred retrait, which is the millon-patch. But how will I find him? Begorra, I should know that v'ice; and I'll make the whole school shtand up together one by one and shout, "Here's a bouncer!" that I will.

John. (*Coming down R. of stage.*) Now let's see how much I know. (*Declaims.*)

"Ye crags and peaks, I'm with you once again!"

Patsy. By my sowl, that's the v'ice of my dr'ams!

John. "I hold to you the hands you first beheld,
To show they still are free."

Patsy. Fray, is it, begorra! Ye'll not hould thim long, me b'y!

John. "Methinks I hear
A spirit in your echoes answer me."

Patsy. Begorra, ye'll soon hear an Irish echo ax ye something else!

John. "And bid your tenant welcome to his home again!"

Patsy. Begorra, you're wilcome to no more water-millons, ye'll find!

John. "Ye guards of Liberty!"

Patsy. Ye little blackguard!

John. "I'm with you once again! I hold my hands
to you,
To show they still are free!"

Patsy. Begorra, they're stained with watermillons, sure!

John. "I rush to you,
As though I could embrace you!"

(*Runs into PATSY'S arms.*)

Patsy. Come on, I'm waiting for you! O, you black-guard! O, yes spalpeen! I've got yes!

John. Who are you? What do you want? Let me go!

Patsy. Niver! Ye must go along wid me, my fine lad; there's a bill a waiting for you at farmer Hopkins's.

John. Farmer Hopkins! But I shall be late for school.

Patsy. O, niver mind the school. You'll git a little uv it there, from a nice big cowhide.

John. Let me go, I say!

Patsy. Quit your howling, and come along.

John. I won't. Help! Help! Help!

Enter CHARLEY and RALPH, R.

Charley. What's the matter, Ray?

Ralph. Hallo, Patsy! What's to pay now?

Patsy. A small bill for watermillons, Master Ralph.

Ralph. O, I see; you're found out, Ray!

John. Well, I wan't the only one in the patch last night.

Ralph. But you're the only one found out; so you must take the consequences.

Charley. Master Jones sent us to look for you; it's five minutes after nine.

John. O, dear, what's to become of me!

Ralph. You must get to school at once. Patsy, I'll be answerable for John Ray's appearance at Farmer Hopkins's after school. Won't that do?

Patsy. To be sure it will. I can depind upon you, Master Ralph. But mind and cape an eye on that chap; fur it's my opinion he's a little cracked; he's bin ravin'

about crags, and peaks, and liberty like a full-blooded Fenian. I'll go home and practise a bit wid that cow-hide. [Exit, L.]

Charley. Well, John, got your piece?

John. Got my piece? No. I've been bothered to death!

Ralph. You've been keeping company with the "thief of time."

John. I'd like to know what you mean by that.

Ralph. I'll tell you. You should have studied your piece yesterday noon; but, instead of that, you went boating. You should have studied last night; but instead of that, you got into a scrape, which promises to make trouble for you; and this morning you played ball instead of taking time for your work.

John. Well, I meant to have studied it yesterday; but I thought I had plenty of time. I wanted a little recreation.

Charley. Yes, John; but you should look out for the lessons first, and not neglect them. Come, let's go to school.

John. And be at the foot of the class. I don't like this.

Ralph. You'll find a remedy for it in the copy-book.

John. What is it?

Ralph. A warning to the dilatory — "Procrastination is the thief of time."

[Exeunt, R.]

THE HYPOCHONDRIAC.

CHARACTERS.

SQUIRE CROUPY, a Farmer.

JOHN and JOSIAH CROUPY, his Sons.

ZEKE CORNSTALK, }
PAT MULLEN, } Farm Hands.

SCENE. — *Room in Squire Croupy's House. Lounge, or Sofa, at back, C. Chairs, R. and L. Costumes rough and plain.*

Enter, R., JOHN and JOSIAH CROUPY.

John. This is bad business, sir.

Josiah. Bad! I never was so provoked in my life! Such a splendid haying day, and when we should all be in the field, dad must up and have one of his tantrums!

John. It is provoking, but then he cannot help being sick.

Josiah. Sick! He's as well as I am; this is the third time he has set the house in an uproar, and the whole neighborhood in a commotion, by declaring he is dying. It's all nonsense! His pulse is regular, his tongue clear, his face ruddy, and his lungs in excellent condition.

Croupy. (*Outside, very loud.*) I tell you I'm going! I tell you I'm going!

Josiah. Do you hear that? Does that sound like weak lungs? He's got what they call the "hypos"! That's what's the matter!

Enter PAT, R.

Pat. Begorra! it's kilt entirely is the squire! and it's my opinion — my opinion, mind, that he can't live from one ind of the bid to the other.

Josiah. Well, never mind your opinion; you just run for Dr. Gridley.

Pat. To be sure I will. (*Starts and returns.*) Will I ax him, would he bring a stomach-pump?

Josiah. No, no; you'll ax him nothing! Come; hurry, hurry!

Pat. To be sure I will. (*Starts and returns.*) If he's not at home, what will I till him?

Josiah. Tell him you're a donkey, with my compliments.

Pat. "Till him you're a donkey, with my compliments." To be sure I will; to be sure I will. [*Exit, L.*]

John. What's the use of sending for Dr. Gridley? He'll only laugh at him.

Josiah. I know it; but if we don't send for him; dad will call us unfeeling.

Enter ZEKE, R.

Zeke. Consarn it, boys, ain't we never going to git started? I've had them are cattle yoked more'n an hour.

Josiah. Can't help it, Zeke; dad's got another of his blue spells; declares he's going to die right off.

Zeke. No! Well, that's bad; right in the middle of

hayin', too! Well, he is the most unlucky chap about getting up his dying days that ever I did see! I thought last night, when he was pilin' in cold pork and taters at such a smashin' rate, there'd be trouble in his insides afore mornin'. But I guess it ain't nothin' discouragin'. Gin him a blue pill, and he'll be all right.

Josiah. Can't get him to take anything; he declares he's had a forerunner in the night that his time is come, and it's no use trying to cure him.

Zeke. Forerunner? Well, I guess he has! The nightmare! He's an old fusser! I'd like to have the doctorin' on him once!

Josiah. What would you do?

Zeke. Well, I'd scare him, so that he would indefinitely postpone his dying day, I reckon! I tell you, boys, you don't get anxious enough about him.

Josiah. Anxious! Why, we've just sent for Dr. Gridley.

Zeke. Pshaw! he won't do no good, nohow. You want a leetle common sense here; that's all. If the old gentleman thinks he's goin' to die, humor him, and kinder help him along.

John. Help him along! What, murder him?

Zeke. No, no! kinder jine in with him, and make him believe you think he's going! He won't be so anxious to go, I reckon.

Josiah. But I don't understand you.

Enter PAT, L.

Pat. It's all up! The doctor's gone to Boston, and won't be back till night. But I lift your message, sure.

Josiah. That's very unfortunate.

Zeke. It's jest the thing! You'll jest come with me. I'll find you a doctor, and we'll have the squire all right and tight in a jiffy! Come along.

[*Exeunt ZEKE and JOSIAH, L.*]

John. Now, what's Zeke got in his head?

Pat. Faix, I don't know; but I mind he scratches it often.

Croupy. (*Outside, R.*) John! Si! are you going to leave me here to die alone?

Enter CROUPY, R. *He is wrapped in a large blanket, with a red night-cap on his head.*

Is this my reward, after all I've done for you, ungrateful scamps! (*Lies down on sofa.*) O, dear, my head! I'm going, I tell you! You won't see your poor old father no more!

John. Be easy, father; the doctor will soon be here.

Pat. Be aisy, squire; the doctor'll put you out of your misery to-morrow.

Croupy. Easy! How can you talk so, when you know I'm going from you! I tell you I had a forerunner last night. I distinctly saw a white horse standing in front of our house!

John. So did I. It was Zeke Cornstalk's Brimstone.

Croupy. O, how can you trifle with the feelings of a dying man! O, my back! I tell you it was a fore-runner.

Pat. Faith, it was the coach from Cranberry jist; that's a four-runner.

Croupy. Shut up, you heathen! O, my head, my head!

Enter JOSIAH, L.

Josiah. Now, father, we'll soon have you all right. I've found a new doctor.

Croupy. All right. How can you be so unfeeling! O, my side! I tell you, I'm going fast! My sands of life are nearly run out!

Pat. Begorra, they be mighty quick sands! But no matter. You'll soon reach hard ground, and rist aisy!

Croupy. Shut up, Pat, or I'll break every bone in your body.

Pat. How weak and fable he is, to be sure!

Enter ZEKE, L., disguised; green spectacles, a broad-brimmed hat, and long linen coat, buttoned up to his chin.

Zeke. How are you all to-day? Don't rise. I'm Dr. Killumquick, M. D., Medical Doctor; Deploma in Latin; Tempus Fugit, Multum in Parvo, E Pluribus Unum, Erin go Bragh!

Pat. Arrah! "My countryman, and yet I know him not." The top of the morning—

Croupy. Shut up, you confounded nuisance! O, my head! My back! O, my sides!

Zeke. We'll fix you all right! I'm the man for your money. Give me your hand. Gracious, what a pulse! Forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, one hundred, one hundred and twenty! Bad case! Bad case!

Croupy. You don't say so!

Zeke. Silence! Don't speak! Don't move! Let me see your tongue. Gracious, what a tongue! Bad case!

Croupy. You don't mean it!

Zeke. Shut up! Let me see your face. Turn it this way. Look at that nose! Gracious, what a nose! It's no use! Your minutes are numbered! In ten you'll be a dead man!

Croupy. You don't say so! O, dear.

Josiah. You're not serious, doctor?

Zeke. Serious! Do you dare insult me! Is this the time to trifle when a human being is standing on the verge of the grave! Look at that nose! It has the true signs of porkopavia!

Pat. Porkopavia, is it! Faith, I thought it was the true sign of whiskey!

Zeke. If you have any parting words to give that old man, be quick; for in ten minutes you will be orphans!

Josiah. Is it possible!

John. I cannot realize it!

Pat. Faix, nor I. Will I be an orphan too — d'ye think?

Zeke. (*Draws JOSIAH and JOHN down front.*) There, I've done my part. Do yours as well, and you'll hear no more of dying! [*Exit, L.*

Josiah. (*Taking out his handkerchief.*) John!

John. (*Taking out his handkerchief.*) Si!

Josiah. I never — expected — to see this — day!
(*Blows his nose.*)

John. No more — did I! (*Blows his nose.*)

Pat. (*Takes out his ragged handkerchief, looks at each of them, then blows his nose violently.*) It's a tirrible blow, sure!

Josiah. He was a kind father. (*More handkerchief business.*)

John. So liberal, so indulgent, so fond of us ! (*Ditto.*)

Pat. And so fond of parates ! (*Ditto.*) O, musha, musha ! O, dear ! (*CROUPY raises his head and shakes his fist at PAT.*)

Josiah. Well, I suppose we must make the best of it. He shall have a handsome funeral.

John. Yes, indeed, he shall — a dozen carriages at least.

Pat. And a hearse. Don't forget the hearse, boys ; for the ould gintleman was very fond of riding by himself.

Josiah. John, did lawyer Sneak make a will for him ?

John. I think not, Si.

Pat. Ov coorse not ; the squire had a will ov his own.

John. No, he told me all the property was to be equally divided between you and me.

Josiah. How considerate ! Well, John, you shall have the meadow near the stream, and I'll take the field that runs to the foot of the hill. (*CROUPY groans.*)

John. Poor old man, he's going fast. That's very fair, Si ; and as you're going to be married, you may keep this house, and I'll take the store at the Corner. (*CROUPY groans.*)

Pat. That's satisfactory. The ould gintleman says yis.

Josiah. And there's the cattle : there'll be no trouble about dividing them. Then there's the horses ; no trouble about them, only give me the brown mare "Jessie," and I'll be quite satisfied. (*CROUPY groans.*)

Pat. That was the ould gintleman's favorite. He don't quite like that.

John. No, no. Father said I was to have that.

Josiah. What's father got to say about it, any way? I'm the eldest, and I'm going to have Jessie.

John. Then you'll have to fight me; for if there is any law in the state, I'll have her.

Pat. Aisy, b'ys; don't disturb the ould gintleman.

Josiah. John Croupy, I'll have Jessie, if I have to sell everything to fight you. She is mine by right.

John. It's no such thing. Father intended her for me, and mine she shall be. (*CROUPY sits up.*)

Enter ZEKE, L.

Zeke. Hallo, boys! what's the matter?

Pat. Faith, only a wee bit of a shindy! It's all about the brown mare Jessie.

Josiah. Which belongs to me.

John. No, sir; to me.

Zeke. O, pshaw! quarrelling about that little "Jessie"! Why, she's a slow coach, any way!

Josiah. She's the fastest trotter in the place, and you know it.

Zeke. I don't know any such thing! Why, my Brimstone can beat her on a five-mile stretch all to pieces!

Josiah. He can't do it.

John. No, sir; the horse can't be found that can beat our Jessie.

Zeke. P'r'aps it can't! P'r'aps it can't! But I'll bet you four barrels of Baldwins ag'in a barrel of the old man's cider he'll do it easy. (*CROUPY jumps up, very excited.*)

Croupy. Take him up, Si; take him up! Don't be skeered! I'll stand the cider!

Josiah. Why, father —

John. Good gracious !

Pat. Bedad, here's an eruption !

Zeke. Why, squire, they told me you were dying !

Josiah. Lie down instantly, father ! the doctor has given you up !

Pat. Lie down, squire, and die like a gentleman !

Croupy. I shan't do anything of the kind. Zeke Cornstalk, if you want to bet that Brimstone ag'in my Jessie, come on !

Josiah. Father, you're in no condition to drive ; you are very sick.

Croupy. No, I ain't. Do you suppose I'm going to lie there while you're dividin' my property ? Not a bit of it ! I'm going to stop round here, and look after things a bit longer ; and if anybody objects, just speak out.

Josiah. What will Dr. Killumquick say ?

Zeke. He'll say the squire is about right ; for I am Dr. Killumquick !

Croupy. You Dr. Killumquick ?

Zeke. Yes ; if you don't believe it, look at my diploma in Latin. Tempus fugit, multum in parvo —

Croupy. Stop ! You've been fooling me among you.

Pat. That's true for you, squire ; but it's tit for tat ; for you've given us a great disapp'intment by your own tomfoolery.

Croupy. And so you are Dr. Killumquick ? Well, you've given me an awful scare, and, I rather think, cured me of any desire to try it on again.

Zeke. I hope you won't, squire ; for it's not a part of our life that needs rehearsing. "Keep a stiff upper lip, and never say die." That's a good motto.

Croupy. First rate, Zeke ; and I'll try and live up to it.

Josiah. That's right, father ; and now let's get to the field ; and after work to-night, you and Zeke shall try the paces of Brimstone and Jessie.

Croupy. I'm ready for him. Jessie's the girl for me !

Pat. I say, squire, the nightmare was a little too much for you last night !

Croupy. I believe it was, Pat.

Pat. Then here's hopin' that between the nightmare and the brown mare, you'll prove the brown mare to be the bist horse ; and that you'll live foriver, to show the world you can die like a gintleman !

"A PUBLIC BENEFACTOR."

CHARACTERS.

ERASTUS STEELE, a Merchant.

HARRY, his Son.

SOLOMON LONGFACE, an Impostor.

CYRUS CAUCUS, a Countryman.

BOBBY SIMSON, a lubberly Boy.

BARNEY HOOLAN, a Laborer.

SCENE. — MR. STEELE'S *office. Desk and Chairs.*

[*Enter STEELE, L., with a newspaper.*]

Steele. Ah, this is glorious! This is indeed fame! (*Reads.*) — "*A Public Benefactor.* — It is with emotions of pride that we chronicle the fact that our esteemed fellow-citizen, Erastus Steele, Esq., has in the most generous manner presented to the managers of the 'Home for Decayed Punsters' the sum of one thousand dollars. Mr. Steele is a gentleman of princely fortune, who, by this act, has demonstrated that his heart is ever open to the calls of the needy." Ah, it is grand to be thus appreciated by the world. After thirty years' work, hard work, during which I have had "Miser," "Skinflint," "Grinder of the Poor," and other equally pleasant epithets, applied to my humble name, by a stroke of the pen and

the gift of a thousand dollars, I am placed upon the pinnacle of fame beside the great ones of the earth, and pronounced "a public benefactor."

[*Enter HARRY, L.*]

Harry. A public humbug!

Steele. What's that? How dare you, young scapegrace, speak thus of your father? Where's the respect due me?

Harry. If I have been wanting in respect, I beg your pardon; but when I see my father making a donkey of himself —

Steele. What! what! Come, sir; first you call me a humbug, and then a donkey. I won't have it.

Harry. Very well, sir; then I will call you "a public martyr;" for such, if I am not much mistaken, you will soon find yourself. Listen to me one moment. You have just been performing a charitable act.

Steele. What if I have? It isn't the first I have done — is it?

Harry. No, indeed; it is not. I could give you a long record of noble acts, quietly, unostentatiously performed by you, and for which I truly honor you; but this last act is the most foolish thing you ever did in your life.

Steele. Is not the object worthy?

Harry. I suppose it is.

Steele. Then of what do you complain? Are you afraid you will not have enough when I am gone?

Harry. Nothing of the sort. It is this foolish display in the papers of which I complain. You have simply advertised yourself as "a public benefactor;" and if you

do not do a large business in consequence, I am greatly mistaken.

Steele. Large business? What do you mean?

Harry. There are scores of individuals who make it their business to see that such "a public benefactor" as you have now become shall not want for objects of charity. You have opened a "Pandora's box," and let loose all the bores and plagues of modern civilization. It would be a waste of time for me to attempt to explain. I have no doubt you will soon have ocular proof that I am right. Here, for instance, is at least three times the usual amount of our morning mail; at least two thirds are begging letters, called forth by your new advertisement. My dear father, be charitable; do all the good you can with your money, but, as you value your peace of mind, never let it appear in the newspapers. [*Exit, R.*]

Steele. Why, that boy's crazy — stark, staring mad! Not let it get into the papers? Why, that's the cream of it! I like it. I glory in the appellation of "a public benefactor." (*Sits at desk.*)

[*Enter, L., LONGFACE, dressed in a rusty suit of black, white neckerchief, black hat, with weed on it, black cotton gloves. Approaches STEELE with outstretched hand.*]

Longface. My dear brother Steele! My noble friend! Let me clasp that munificent hand!

Steele. (*Takes no notice of the hand.*) Who in thunder are you?

Longface. I have just heard of your noble charity, and I flew to grasp your hand. Do let me clasp that noble hand. In behalf of suffering humanity — in behalf — in behalf of the noble workers for that same

humanity — in behalf of the down-trodden — in behalf of — of — do let me clasp that noble hand.

Steele. Look here ; I don't know who you are, nor do I care ; but if you put that black paw of yours in my face again, I'll knock you down.

Longface. My dear brother —

Steele. I'm not your brother ; never heard of you before. What do you want ? What's your name ?

Longface. Solomon Longface is my name. I am a humble worker among the down-trodden and the oppressed.

Steele. Well, I'm not down-trodden, but I'm very much oppressed by your visit. What do you want of me ?

Longface. To thank you for your blessed act of charity ; so kind, so liberal — to clasp your noble —

Steele. No, you don't ; hands off. I'm very much obliged to you for your good opinion ; and as I'm busy, why, good day.

Longface. One moment, my dear brother. I — that is — this is a subject that I feel great hesitation in approaching.

Steele. Then keep away from it.

Longface. I must call your attention to the field of usefulness in which I am at present engaged, "The Bridget Society, for furnishing clothes-lines and pins to distressed washer-women."

Steele. Well, what of it ?

Longface. You are "a public benefactor." Here is an object you can benefit. Think of drying the tears of five hundred distressed fellow-beings !

Steele. Drying their tears ! I thought your object was to dry their clothes.

Longface. My dear brother Steele, you delight in doing good. Your autograph —

Steele. O, ho! My autograph! That's what you want! Why didn't you say so before?

Longface. Your autograph to a check for one thousand dollars would greatly benefit our struggling society.

Steele. Make their *lines* fall in pleasant places, and set them on their *pins*.

Longface. Indeed, indeed it would!

Steele. My dear brother Longface, it may be so, but I don't see it.

Longface. Perhaps I have set it a leetle high. Say five hundred —

Steele. No, sir.

Longface. One hundred, for present emergencies.

Steele. I'll see you and your five hundred washer-women skewered on their own clothes-lines before I'll give you a dollar.

Longface. But consider, dear brother —

Steele. Dear *bother*, I have. You are an insufferable bore; and if you are not out of my office in three minutes, I'll hand you over to an officer as a swindler.

Longface. Have I been mistaken? "A public benefactor" you? Why, you mean old skinflint, I believe you paid for that puff in the newspaper. But I'll expose you. Public benefactor! Bah! Public old humbug! [*Exit, L.*

Steele. Clear out! You show your face here again, and I'll break every bone in your ugly old carcass! Here's a scene! commencing with "my dear brother," and ending with "public old humbug"! That man is an impostor. Harry was right; but I'll see no more of them. (*Goes to desk.*)

Enter CYRUS CAUCUS, L., *roughly dressed*.

Cyrus. Why, 'Rastus Steele, heow dew yeou dew? Heow dew yeou dew?

Steele. You have the advantage of me.

Cyrus. Wal, that's a good one! Why, bless yeou, I never took advantage of a man in my life! Never, by jingo! Yeou don't seem to recollect me — dew yeou?

Steele. I confess I do not.

Cyrus. Yeou don't say so! Why, I thought yeou'd know me the minute yeou sot yeour eyes onto me. I'm from Skilletville.

Steele. Ah, indeed! The town in which I was born.

Cyrus. Yaas; good old Skilletville. It's some punkins of a place tew, I tell yeou; and, 'Rastus Steele, up there they're mighty preoud of yeou! Jest think of it: the leetle, ragged, dirty-faced boy, that used to drive keows in Skilletville, has turned out "a public benefactor." Hooray!

Steele. O, you've heard of it!

Cyrus. Heerd of it? Wal, I guess we hev. Wasn't there a commotion in teown meeting last night when I read that little notice in the paper! Sech a yellin' and a shoutin' yer never did see! Old Squire Green, he made a speech. Deacon Weatherspoon, he shouted glory! and that darned old woman, Betty Smithers, who'd no business in teown meeting anyhow, she yelled "Amen," at the top of her voice.

Steele. Ah, it is gratifying to be remembered by old associates.

Cyrus. I guess it is; but I've got something more gratifying than that. Yeou see, we want a new engine-

house bad ; and where the money was a comin' from we didn't know ; but when we saw that notice, Joe Smithers he jest shouted " Euriky ! "

Steele. " Euriky " ? What does that mean ?

Cyrus. Wal, it's some kind of Greek or Hebrew, I guess, and means, " I see it," or " I've got it," or something of that kind. So, says Joe, there's 'Rastus Steele has got rich ; he's a P. B., which means a public benefactor. He'll help us, and I move that Cyrus Caucus be a committee of the hull to go and see 'Rastus Steele, and ask him for a thousand dollars. So I took the fust train, and here I am.

Steele. And you want me to give you one thousand dollars to build an engine-house.

Cyrus. Yes ; for which yeou will receive the everlasting blessings of Skilletville.

Steele. I'll see Skilletville burned before I give a dollar.

Cyrus. Yeou don't say so !

Steele. I certainly do say it, and I mean it. There are a dozen men in Skilletville just as able to give as I. Go to them.

Cyrus. And yeou won't — Wall, I never would hev believed that a son of old Skillet —

Steele. Mr. Caucus, when I left Skilletville, I hadn't a friend in the place. Your selectmen gave me my choice to leave town or go to the poorhouse ; and if ever I set foot in it again, I hope —

Cyrus. Neow don't swear, 'Rastus ; make it five hundred, and I'll be satisfied.

Steele. No.

Cyrus. One hundred —

Steele. No, no, no!

Cyrus. Wall, say, then, give us a new bell for our church — won't yeou?

Steele. Not a dollar! Not a bell, not even a rope, — unless you want to hang yourself.

Cyrus. And yeou call yeourself a public benefactor! Wal, I never! 'Rastus Steele, yeou're a mean old cuss! Yeou'll want yeour effigy set up in Skilletville one of these days; and I advise yeou to hev it, only be sure and label it a darned mean old public humbug! [*Exit, L.*]

Steele. Now that man's mad, I suppose; and if he ain't, I am. I wish those confounded papers had been burned before they stuck me into them!

Enter BOBBY, L.

Well, what do you want?

Bobby. Be you Mr. Steele?

Steele. Yes; my name is Steele.

Bobby. Erastus Steele?

Steele. Yes; Erastus Steele. What do you want?

Bobby. Be you the man wot had his name in the paper yesterday?

Steele. Yes, yes! What do you want?

Bobby. Want to look at you. My mother always tells me to take a good look at great men.

Steele. Indeed! What is your name?

Bobby. Well, yesterday it was Bobby Simson, but I had it changed; and to-day it's Bobby Erastus Steele Simson.

Steele. Had it changed — what for?

Bobby. Well, you see, my mother, she's a widow lady, without any husband; and I'm her orphan child, without

any father ; and she reads the papers ; and she read how as you were a public benefactor ; and she thought if I was named after you, you would be pleased, and do something for me ; and so she changed my name. Ain't you pleased?

Steele. Pleased? You grinning monkey, what do you expect me to do for you?

Bobby. Well, I want to go to college. I don't like the grammar school ; the lessons are too hard.

Steele. And so you want to go to college. Do you see that door? Put yourself outside of that quick, or I'll put you in a college where you won't get out in a hurry. Leave! (*Takes him by the collar and leads him to the door.*) [Exit BOBBY.

An impudent little monkey!

Bobby. (*Sticks his head in.*) Great benefactor you are! If you won't send me to college, give me a quarter to buy some candy.

Steele. Clear out! (*Throws ruler at him.*)

[BOBBY disappears, L.

This notoriety is getting to be positively unbearable.

Enter BARNEY HOOLAN, L.

Well, now, what do you want?

Barney. I beg your pardon! If yer plase, is Mr. Steele widdin? I donno.

Steele. Well, I do. He is, and I am he. What do you want?

Barney. If ye plase, it's all on account of the ould woman.

Steele. What old woman?

Barney. Mrs. Hoolan. She says to me, "Barney,"

says she. "Anan," says I. "It's very could and on-comfortable here for us and the childers. You must find a larger house." "By my troth," says I, "I've found one already, forninst the hill beyant there."

Steele. Well, what's all this to do with me?

Barney. Whist! Be aisy. I'm a comin' to it. Says I, "Mrs. Hoolan, it's a mighty large sum it would take to get that home, and where would I find it?" "O, Barney," says she, "there's a fine good man by the name of Steele, that gives away his money to git his name in the papers. So, do yer mind, Barney, you go to him, ax him, would he give you the small matther of five hundred dollars, and we'll name our next boy for him, and git my brother Mike, what tinds the ingine in the paper office, to sthick his name in." And so, axing your pardon, I stepped in.

Steele. And now just step out, you miserable beggar.

Barney. Beggar, is it? Ye blackguard! Do ye dare call Barney Hoolan, a free-born American citizen, who pays his taxes and votes the dimocratic ticket, a beggar? Benefactor, is it ye are? By the blessid St. Pathrick, what's the good uv it, when all the poor gits is a blast of billingsgate from yer ugly jaws! I'll tach yer to insult me!

Steele. Here, Harry, Harry!

Enter HARRY, R.

I do believe this man will assault me.

Barney. Salt, is it, begorra? Ye jist come out into the public highway, and I'll salt and pickle ye too, ye ugly ould curmudgeon! Away wid ye. [*Exit, L.*]

Steele. Lock that door! Keep them out! Tell

everybody I've gone out of town. I'm going home; going to bed, and going to stay there a week. All this comes of trying to be charitable.

Harry. No, father; this comes of letting the world know you are charitable. Keep it to yourself. So you don't like being a public benefactor?

Steele. No; and if ever my name gets into a newspaper again, I'll shoot myself, to avoid the consequences.

Harry. Ah, father, your old way was the best.

Steele. I believe you, Harry; and I believe the only way to become a true public benefactor is by obeying the Scripture injunction, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."
[*Exeunt.*]

THE RUNAWAYS.

CHARACTERS.

ABEL GRUMP, a Tuxbury Farmer.
JOHNNY GRUMP, } the Runaways.
CHARLEY BLACK, }
POLICEMAN No. 429.

SCENE. — *Street in Boston.*

Abel. (*Outside, R.*) Whoa, I tell you! Stand still — can't you? Whoa, now!

Enters, R., dressed in long blue frock, slouched hat, whip in hand.

That air tarnal mare donno the difference between the sidewalk and the street! Darn her, she's tried to git into every shop she come to! This is a purty speckeration, anyhow! Right in the middle of my haying I must harness up and drive forty miles arter two pesky boys, that took it into their heads to run off to Boston to seek their fortins! Jest as if Tuxbury wasn't good enough for 'em! Why, I've lived in Tuxbury, man and boy, a matter of fifty years or more, and I never thought o' coming to Boston. Considerable of a place, anyhow. Now I've got here, I donno where to look for 'em.

Hollo, there's a sojer! Here, captain, major, general, see here — will you?

Enter POLICEMAN No. 429, R.

Policeman. Well, sir, what can I do for you?

Abel. Be you infantry, artillery, or merlishy?

Police. Neither. I am a policeman.

Abel. Sho! You don't say! Policeman, what's that on your buzzum — "429?" 'Tain't your weight — is it?

Police. That, sir, is my number.

Abel. Sho! Where you live, I s'pose. Well, you do look big enough to find your way home without it. S'pose they're afraid you'll git lost!

Police. Come, come; I'm in a hurry. State your case.

Abel. State my case? Well, my case is a purty hard case. Hain't seen nothing of two boys — have you?

Police. Two boys? Yes, I've seen a hundred!

Abel. Sho! But I mean my boy Johnny and the Black boy, that run away from Tuxbury.

Police. O, ho! Your boy has run away with a negro!

Abel. Negro? No, sir; Charlie Black is Squire Black's boy, a darned little imp of mischief! He's always gitting my Johnny into scrapes!

Police. If you will give me a description of the boys, I will try to hunt them up.

Abel. Sho! Will you, though? Well, my Johnny he looks just like me, and the Black boy is the very picter of his father.

Police. That's a queer description. I see what you look like, but I never saw the other boy's father.

Abel. Sho! You don't say so! Live in Boston, and don't know Squire Black! Why, he's the member from Tuxbury; he comes down here to legislate in Ginerall Court.

Police. There are a great many "members" come down here that I do not know. However, you come with me, and I'll try to find the boys.

Abel. Well, now, that's clever. If you'll help me find 'em, I'll make it worth your while. (*Takes pocket-book from breast.*)

Police. Thank you; but we never take anything.

Abel. Sho! You don't say! Well, that's worth remembering: Boston policemen never take anything.

Police. You shall step round to the station with me, state your case to the captain, and perhaps some clew to the whereabouts of the runaways can be obtained.

Abel. Well, I'll go right along with yer. Here's my wagon. I'd better drive along. S'pose you won't mind taking a seat, if you don't take nothing. (*Puts pocket-book into his breast; it falls upon the stage.*)

Police. Certainly not; only be quick about it.

Abel. Them air boys have gin me a heap of trouble. I'm precious fond of Johnny. I should hate to lose him, specially in haying-time. [*Exeunt.*]

Abel. (*Outside.*) Whoa, darn you! Didn't you ever see a policeman afore?

Enter, L., JOHNNY and CHARLIE, with bundles.

Charlie. Well, Johnny, in Boston at last.

Johnny. Yes; and very near the last of me. Every bone in my body aches, and my feet are dreadfully blistered. O, dear! I wish I was home again!

Charlie. You're a pretty chap — ain't you? grumbling and growling all the time! Where's your spunk?

Johnny. Gone; used up. Gave out long ago. Forty miles of walking have completely demolished it. O, don't I wish I was home again!

Charlie. Bah, baby! Don't you want your mother?

Johnny. You may sneer, Charlie, but mothers are mighty convenient institutions when a fellow is used up with aching bones and blistered feet.

Charlie. (*Sings.*) "Kiss me, mother; kiss your darling." Ha, ha! Come, Johnny, don't be spooney! We're too old to be tied to our mothers' apron-strings. We set out, like bold knights, in search of that fame and fortune which await us here in Boston.

Johnny. O, darn your fame and fortune! I'm tired and hungry.

Charlie. Hungry? Well, now you mention it, so am I! What have we left in the way of eatables?

Johnny. One solitary doughnut.

Charlie. (*Tragically.*) Ha, ha! "The last my mother gave."

Johnny. No, the last of two dozen abstracted from my mother's cupboard.

Charlie. Divide it, Johnny. You know our agreement when we started: share equally.

Johnny. Yes; but the sharing has been all on my side. You had no money. I had a dollar. You furnished no provisions. I appropriated the family supply of doughnuts. It strikes me it is about time for you to do something for the company.

Charlie. All in good time. Let's divide the doughnut. (*JOHNNY takes doughnut from the bundle, and they eat.*)

Johnny. Pretty dry pickings for "bold knights."

Charlie. Well, it is rather tough. However, there's good luck in store for us in this famous city.

Johnny. Well, perhaps there is. I've heard you tell about "picking up gold in the streets," but I don't see it.

Charlie. Ha! what's that? (*Sees pocket-book.*) "Finding's havings." (*Picks it up.*) Here's luck — a pocket-book! stuffed with bills too! I told you, Johnny, fortune awaited me in Boston.

Johnny. You? *Us*, you mean. By jingo, what a prize!

Charlie. (*Counting.*) Tens, twenties, a fifty, one hundred! Why, this *is* luck!

Johnny. Ain't it? I feel better. Now then, Charlie, "divy," you know.

Charlie. Do what?

Johnny. Divide it. You haven't forgot our bargain to share everything.

Charlie. But this is a different matter. I found the pocket-book. You certainly cannot expect me to give you half of what I find.

Johnny. But, hang it, Charlie, you expected half of my doughnuts.

Charlie. Doughnuts and money are different articles.

Johnny. So it seems. And you won't divide?

Charlie. Certainly not. I found it, and I mean to keep it.

Johnny. Charlie Black, you're a humbug. You induced me to run away from a good home to share your fortunes in Boston; agreed to share everything, mind, and now you refuse to stick to your bargain.

Charlie. No; but this is a special case. I didn't say

anything about it, but I made a mental reservation that whoever found a pocket-book should keep it.

Johnny. Yes; I only wish I'd made a "mental reservation" concerning my doughnuts. You'd have been glad to turn back before we got half way here. (*Cries outside, R., "Stop thief!" "Stop thief!" "Pickpocket!"*)

Charlie. Good gracious! What's that?

Johnny. Somebody's lost his pocket-book. Shouldn't wonder if it had something to do with yours. Probably some thief dropped it.

Charlie. You don't say so! Here, Johnny, you take it. Let's jump into that park and hide. I'll divide.

Johnny. Will you? You're a little too late. Had you stuck to your bargain, I'd have stuck by you.

Charlie. But, Johnny, I shall be arrested.

Johnny. Shouldn't wonder if you was. Good by! I'm off!

Charlie. Don't desert me. I shall be locked up.

Johnny. I think you will; but don't get frightened. I'm going back to Tuxbury. I'll tell your father all about it, and he'll get you out of the scrape. Good by. I'm off. [*Exit, L.*]

Charlie. Johnny, come back. He's gone! What shall I do? I'll run. (*Runs across stage to L.*)

POLICEMAN No. 429 *enters, R., chases him, and seizes him by the collar.*

Police. O, that's your game — is it? But you're wanted.

Charlie. What's the matter! I haven't done nothing. Let me go. I picked it up.

Police. Shut up! There's a clear case against you,

my lad. Give me that pocket-book, and come along with me.

Charlie. You let me go. I don't belong here. I've just arrived from the country.

Police. Well, we'll send you back to the country — sometime. But now you are wanted at the station-house. Come along. (*Drags him towards R.*)

Charlie. But you are mistaken. I'm not a thief. I can prove my innocence.

Police. Well, come and prove it, then. Come along, I say.

Abel. (*Outside, R.*) Neow yeou don't! I'll fix you, you scamp! I'll teach you to run away!

Enter L., dragging JOHNNY.

Hallo, 429! I've found my Johnny; and ef we can only find the Black boy — Hallo! who you got there?

Police. A young thief who picked a gentleman's pocket.

Charlie. Don't you believe him, Mr. Grump.

Abel. Sho! Why, that's the Black boy!

Police. Is it? He's a thief, then.

Abel. Sho! You don't say so! What will Squire Black say?

Charlie. I'm not a thief. I found the pocket-book right here in the street.

Johnny. That's true, father; I was with him when he found it. I wanted him to divide the money. He refused, and I left him.

Police. You were with him? Then I want you too.

Abel. Now hold on, 429; there's some mistake here.

Police. No, there isn't. Here's the pocket-book.

Abel. Sho! Why, that's my sheep-skin!

Police. Yours?

Abel. Sart'in. Why, I must have dropped it when I offered you something. You'll find my name writ in it —
ABEL GRUMP.

Police. (*Opens pocket-book.*) "Abel Grump," sure enough. It certainly is yours. (*Gives it to ABEL.*)

Abel. Mine, sure as preaching! Why, you tarnal imps! what have you been up to?

Johnny. We've been doing wrong, father; and I'm sorry, for my part. Let me get back to Tuxbury, and you'll never hear of my running away again.

Police. Hadn't you better take them to the station-house, and lock them up?

Charlie. No, I don't want to go.

Johnny. No, I don't want to be locked up.

Abel. Shet up your yelling! Do you want to rouse the neighbors? No. 429, I'll take care of my Johnny. As for the Black boy, you jest take him up to the state-house, knock at the front door, and ask for Squire Black. He'll take care of him.

Police. I'll do it at once.

Johnny. Charlie.

Charlie. Well.

Johnny. Don't you think "picking up gold in the streets" is pretty risky business?

Charlie. I begin to think it is.

Johnny. And that "running away" is a poor start for fame and fortune. I'm sure I do.

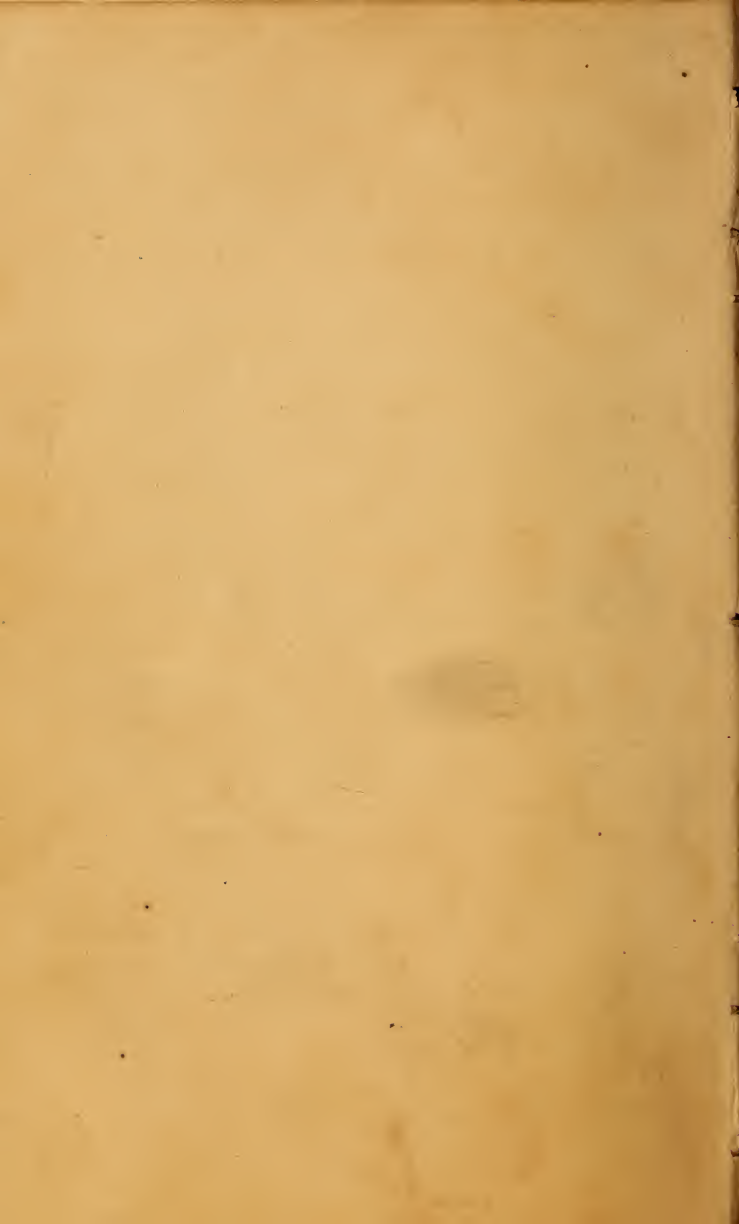
Abel. Well, I'll take care it don't happen again. I tell you what, boys, you've done two mean things: you've run away from your nat'ral protectors, who have the

best right to you and what you arn; and you've taken that what don't belong to you, with the intention of appropriating it, individually and collectively, before looking for the rightful owner; and if you don't feel ashamed of yourselves, you oughter. Come along, Johnny; here's the mare wandering round like a lost Hottentot! Let's start for Tuxbury. I guess you've both had a scare that will last you for the rest of your nat'ral existence. Bless your lucky stars, Charlie Black, that it was my calf-skin you found; and thank yours, Johnny Grump, that you've got a home, and a daddy to take you there. Come along.

[*Exeunt* POLICEMAN and CHARLIE, R.;

ABEL and JOHNNY, L.

Abel. (*Outside.*) Whoa, darn ye; let them cobblestones alone. Whoa, I say!



IGNORANCE IS BLISS.

CHARACTERS.

FRED BROWN. *Active*

JOHNNY GRAY. *Canine*

NED WHITE. *Mum*

SCENE. — *Recitation-Room at a Public School.*

Enter FRED.

Fred. A pretty task Master Green has given me this time! He calls me to his desk, and says, "Brown, those boys, Gray and White, have been very inattentive during the music lesson: take them into the recitation-room, and keep them there until they can sing four stanzas of 'The Battle-cry of Freedom.'" A nice music-master I am! I can't read, sing, or growl a note, and I don't know a single line of "The Battle-cry of Freedom." But I must not let them know that. Here they are. (*Enter* GRAY and WHITE; *they get in a corner of the stage, and whisper together.*) Now, what conspiracy is hatching? Hem! Here, you fellows, do you know what you came here for?

Gray. To take a music lesson, I suppose.

Fred. Well, you had better commence.

White. Certainly, after you.

Fred. After me! What do you mean?

White. I believe it's the custom of all music-masters to first sing the song they wish to teach. (*Aside to GRAY.*) He can't sing a note.

Gray. (*Aside to WHITE.*) He can't? good! Let's plague him. (*Aloud.*) Come, singing-master, proceed.

Fred. No matter about me. You two can sing, and when you make a mistake I will correct it.

Gray. You'll correct it! That's good. With what, pray?

Fred. With this. (*Producing a rattan from under his jacket.*)

White. O, dear, I don't like that sort of tuning-fork.

Fred. You'll get it if you don't hurry. Come, boys, "The Battle-cry of Freedom." *Kate*

Gray. (*Aside to WHITE.*) Ned, do you know the song?

White. (*Aside.*) I know just one line.

Gray. (*Aside.*) O, dear, we're in a scrape. (*Aloud.*) Master Fred, will you please give me the first line? I've forgotten it.

Fred. Certainly. Let me see. "Rock me to sleep, mother." No, that isn't it.

White. (*Aside.*) He's split on that rock.

Fred. Hem! ah! "Dear father, dear father, come home." O, bother! *bar.*

Gray. (*Aside.*) It'll bother him to "come home" with that line.

Fred. "Give me a cot." — O, pshaw! I tell you what, *boys*, I didn't come here to talk, but to listen: now you two sing away at once, or down comes the rattan.

Gray. (*Aside.*) I say, Ned, Brown doesn't know it; *Kate Jennie*

here's fun. Now you just keep quiet, and ring in your line when I snap my fingers.

White. (Aside.) All right. I understand. When you snap, I sing.

Fred. Come, come! Strike up, or I shall strike down.

Gray. (Sings to the tune of the Battle-cry of Freedom,) —

“Mary had a little lamb;
Its fleece was white as snow.”

(Snaps his fingers.)

White. (Very loud.)

“Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Gray. (Sings.)

“And everywhere that Mary went
The lamb was sure to go.” *(Snaps.)*

White. “Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Fred. Capital! Perfectly correct, perfectly correct.
Sing again.

Gray. (Sings.)

“It followed her to school one day;
It was against the rule.” *(Snaps.)*

White. “Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Gray. (Sings.)

“It made the children laugh and play
To see a lamb at school.” *(Snaps.)*

White. “Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Fred. Beautiful! beautiful! I couldn't do it better myself.

Gray. (Aside.) I should think not.

White. Come, Mr. Singing-master, you try a stanza.

Fred. What, sir! do you want to shirk your task?
Sing away.

Gray. (*Sings.*)

“And so the teacher turned him out;
Yet still he lingered near.” (*Snap.*)

White. “Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Gray.

“And waited patiently about,
Till Mary did appear.” (*Snap.*)

White. “Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Fred. Glorious! Why, boys, it's a perfect uproar.

White. There's enough, isn't there?

Fred. No, sir, four stanzas. Come, be quick.

Gray. I don't know any more.

White. I'm sure I don't.

Fred. Yes you do, you're trying to shirk; but I won't have it. You want a taste of the rattan. Come, be lively.

Gray. (*Sings.*)

“What makes the lamb love Mary so?”
The eager children cry.” (*Snap.*)

White. “Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Gray.

“Why, Mary loves the lamb, you know,
The teacher did reply.” (*Snap.*)

White. “Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.”

Fred. There, boys, I knew you could sing. Now come in, and I will tell Master Green how capitally you have done — that I couldn't do better myself. [*Exit.*

White. Well, Johnny, we got out of that scrape pretty well.

Gray. Yes, ^{rate}~~Ned~~; but it's a poor way. I must pay a little more attention to my singing.

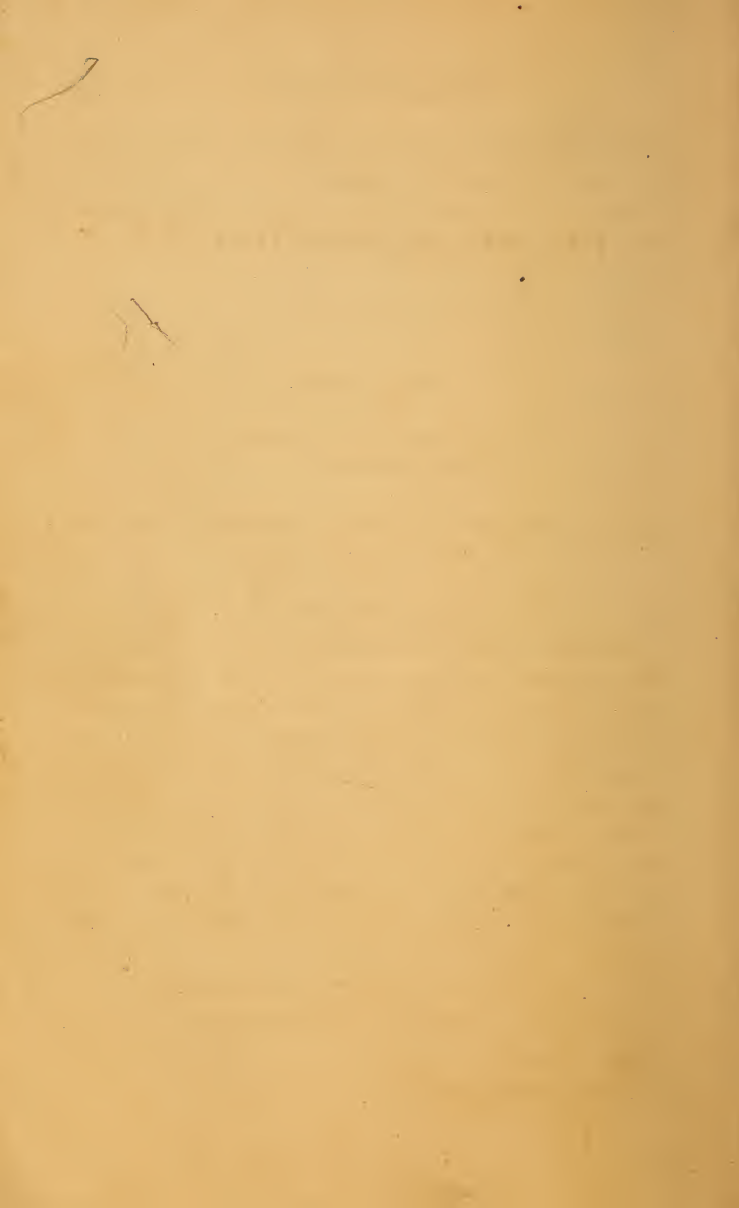
White. And so must I, for we may not always have a teacher on whom the old saying fits so well.

Gray. Old saying? What's that?

White. "Where ignorance is bliss —"

Gray. O, yes, "'Twere folly to be wise."

[*Exeunt.*



THE RIVAL POLITICIANS.

CHARACTERS.

TOM SLOWBOY, Conservative.

SAM SLY, Radical.

SCENE. — *Platform at a School Exhibition.* — SAM SLY
seated among the audience.

Enter TOM SLOWBOY upon platform.

Slowboy. (With extravagant and awkward gestures.)
Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: It is my pe-rivilege to stand before you to-night as the ex-ponent of a party, gentlemen, which is destined to make a new era in the world's history; a party, gentlemen, standing upon the platform upon which our forefathers stood; a party, gentlemen, above all trickery; *the* party which is to save this glorious country — this mighty, this stupenduous country, which, stretching from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf, washed by the Atlantic and the Pacific, yet hangs upon the verge of ruin.

“Lives there a man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself has said —”

Sly. Louder!

Slow. (Louder.) I say, —

“Lives there a man —”

Sly. Louder!

Slow. I'll just thank that small boy if he will preserve order.

“This is my own, my native land?”

Gentlemen, one man, and one alone, can save us. Need I tell you who he is? No, gentlemen, no.

Sly. Yes, gentlemen, yes; let's have his name.

Slow. It is, gentlemen, that sturdy patriot, that unflinching friend of the people, the great inventor of soup-houses, Nickodemus Orcutt — he for whom, to-morrow, you will cast such an overwhelming vote, as selectman of the town of Scratchgravel —

Sly. Hurrah for Old Nick!

Slow. This is the man, gentlemen, who can save us. You know him well. The public spirit, the honesty, the worth of this famed patriot, this great promoter of — of — of —

Sly. The Onion.

Slow. The Onion; no, no; the Union. Sam Sly, I've had quite enough of this.

Sly. I guess we all have.

Slow. I didn't come here to be insulted. I go for free speech.

Sly. So do I. Go it, Slowboy.

Slow. Mr. Nickodemus Orcutt, gentlemen, is a warm, thoughtful friend of the people; not a rash man, seeking to drive the country to perdition with steamboats and locomotives, but a man anxious to do all in his power to revive the good old days of safety and sobriety; a man, gentlemen, deeply read —

Sly. Especially his nose.

Slow. Confound you, Sly. — Thoroughly dyed —

Sly. Mark his whiskers.

Slow. Will somebody put that boy out? — Who would not turn a hair —

Sly. 'Cause he's bald.

Slow. O, won't you catch it? — A hair's breadth from the party lines; a conservative man, gentlemen, who will abolish railroads, which always end in a smash-up; prohibit steamboats, which blow out with a blow-up; and revive, in all their pristine beauty, the only secure means of travel — the stage-coach and the canal-boat; a man, gentlemen, who will so clip the American eagle —

Sly. Louder!

Slow. (*Louder.*) The American eagle.

Sly. Louder!

Slow. O, pshaw! Look here, Sam Sly, what did you come here for?

Sly. To cheer for old Nick. You promised me a dollar if I would.

Slow. Confound you! can't you be quiet!

Sly. (*Jumping upon his seat.*) What! and see the American eagle abused? No, sir; I claim the privilege, at all times and in all places, of standing up for the American eagle! He's the prey of every political spouter in the land. He's been lugged to the top of the Rocky Mountains, been made to roost on the towers of Moro Castle, skewered on every liberty-pole, and nailed to the wall in every public hall; and now you propose to clip him. I protest against this outrage to the first of American poultry.

Slow. Sam Sly, whose meeting is this?

Sly. The people's meeting. You would like to make it the caucus of an old foggy party. But it won't do, Slowboy; it won't do.

Slow. Sly, I'll give you another dollar to be quiet.

Sly. (*Resumes his seat.*) All right, Slowboy; fire away.

Slow. Gentlemen, Mr. Nickodemus Orcutt has such a regard for the American eagle that he would clip its wings, that it might stay at home, and not run the risk of being sweltered in that Turkish bath, Cuba, or frozen in that ice-cream saloon, Alaska. And, gentlemen, the constitution — the constitution, gentlemen, he would lay out —

Sly. Hold on, Slowboy.

Slow. What's the matter now?

Sly. (*Jumping up on his seat.*) Can't stand that, Slowboy; I must stand up for the constitution — the glorious constitution. It's been abused, Slowboy — shamefully abused. It's been left at Gettysburg, at Buffalo, at St. Louis, swung all around the circle, and now you want to lay it out.

Slow. Will you be quiet? — Nickodemus Orcutt would lay it out on the table of every farmer in the land, as the only true chart by which to steer.

Sly. (*Resuming his seat.*) O, that'll do; go on, Slowboy.

Slow. And now, gentlemen, I turn to that symbol of the republic, the American flag — that flag which has lain in the dust —

Sly. Hold on, Slowboy; hold on. Can't stand that.

Slow. Sly, you're a nuisance. You've been the bane of my existence. Whenever, as speaker or as poet, I

have endeavored to make my mark, you're always in the way. Perhaps you'd like to take my place.

Sly. (*Jumping upon platform.*) Thank you. I don't care if I do make a few feeble remarks.

Slow. Halloo! you ain't coming up here!

Sly. To be sure I am; didn't you invite me?

Slow. But I didn't mean it. Come, go down, that's a good fellow, and let me finish my speech.

Sly. No, sir; this is a public meeting, and I've just as good a right to speak as you have.

Slow. Public meeting! Pshaw! it's an exhibition, and I have the floor. You've no business here. Now, Sly, do go down.

Sly. After you've invited me here? No, sir.

Slow. You're spoiling everything. You've upset my ideas.

Sly. Well, that won't break anything.

Slow. I've only five minutes more to speak. Now do go, Sly.

Sly. No, sir. Five minutes? I'll tell you what I'll do, Slow: I'll help you out. We'll divide the five minutes. You shall speak one, then I'll speak one; and so on, till the time is consumed.

Slow. O, pshaw! I can't do that; I've got the floor.

Sly. So have I. I don't believe in compromises; but for once I was willing to humor you; but, as you don't like it, here goes: Ladies and gentlemen,—

Slow. Hold on: I consent, though you have no right here.

Sly. I think I have, anything you have said to the contrary notwithstanding; so go ahead; there's the clock, and when time's up I'll give the word.

Slow. Gentlemen, Mr. Nick — Mr. Nick — Mr. Nick — Confound it, Sam Sly, you've knocked it all out of my head. Where did I leave off? — the American eagle? No, I said that. The constitution? O, pshaw! Mr. Nick. — Dear me, how time does fly! — Ah, I have it at last. Gentlemen, Mr. Nickodemus Orcutt and the American flag —

Sly. (*Who has been standing watching the clock, pulls him by the sleeve.*) Time, Slowboy. Ladies and Gentlemen: Mr. Chairman: Sir, I appear before you to-night a humble American citizen, with a heart filled with gratitude to the noble founders of this glorious republic — this free and happy republic, whose equal cannot be found; and, would time permit, I should be proud and happy to pour forth, in humble imitation of my eloquent friend here, warm tributes to their patriotism and virtue. But time flies. Let me speak of one who is near and dear to all of us, our esteemed fellow-townsmen, Samuel Sawyer, who is up for selectman in opposition to Mr. Nickodemus Orcutt. You all know him. A young, talented, enterprising lawyer — a true type of Young America.

Slow. Time's up, Sly.

Sly. A rising man, eloquent in the public assembly.

Slow. Sly, Sly! time's up.

Sly. Genial on a —

Slow. (*Pulling SLY by sleeve.*) Time's up.

Sly. O, is it? Go ahead, Slowboy.

Slow. Go ahead! — I should think so! Look here, Sly; you ain't playing fair; you've run over your time considerably; it's one of your regular sly dodges, and I won't stand it. Do you hear? I tell you I won't stand

it! Why don't you speak? (*SLY points to the clock.*) O, dear! I forgot; where did I leave off? How that clock does go! Ladies and gentlemen: Mr. Chairman. — Dear me! where *did* I leave off! I have it: Mr. Nickodemus Orcutt and the American flag —

Sly. Time, Slowboy. Gentlemen: Mr. Sawyer, as I said before, is a true type of Young America — a progressive man; a man of enlarged ideas, who believes in the spread of freedom, the rights of workingmen, the acquisition of territory, a patron of railroads, a warm advocate for woman's rights, universal suffrage, and the protection of American citizens even when on a train. Elect him, and you annex Cuba this year, Mexico the next, conquer Europe the year after, and raise the Stars and Stripes upon the Great Wall of China in 1870.

Slow. Time's up, Sly.

Sly. Elect him, and peace shall reign once more in the halls of Congress.

Slow. Time's up, Sly.

Sly. And in the South —

Slow. (*Pushing SLY.*) Time's up, Sly.

Sly. O, is it? How time does fly! Go ahead, Slowboy.

Slow. Go ahead! It's all very well to say, Go ahead! But how can I go ahead when you act so? I tell you what, Sly, if I catch you running over time again, I'll wallop you, you little — O, dear! my speech! Where was I? Mr. Sly — I mean Mr. Speaker: ladies and gentlemen — Sly — Gent — O, dear! — American eagle — constitution — I have it! Mr. Nickodemus Orcutt and the American flag —

Sly. Time, Slowboy. Ladies and gentlemen: I could

use an hour profitably in sounding the virtues of Mr. Sawyer, but time will not permit. I shall only ask you to compare this whole-souled patriotic type of Young America with that rusty, crusty old foggy, Old Nick —

Slow. Hold on, Sly; I can't stand that, time or no time. Abusing my candidate in that manner. (*To audience.*) — Gentlemen: —

Sly. Hold on, Slowboy; the five minutes are up. A bargain's a bargain, you know.

Slow. I don't care; I will speak.

Sly. Well, then, we'll give you another minute.

Slow. That's all I want. If it hadn't been for you, I should have been through long ago. What right have you here any way? If you attempt to interrupt me again, I'll have you placed in custody as a disturber of the peace. Ladies and gentlemen: I hope you will pardon this interruption; it was none of my seeking. You've seen this boy before. He's one of the small miseries of human life which must be endured. But to my speech. As I was saying — Dear me! what was I saying? Mr. Nickodemus Orcutt and the American flag —

Sly. Time, Slowboy, time. (*Runs off.*)

Slow. Clear out, you nuisance! Wait till after school; that's all! [*Exit.*]

“COALS OF FIRE.”

CHARACTERS.

ADAM CRABTREE, a Farmer.

PHIL O'HARA, his Servant.

MR. MEEK, a Country Minister.

BOBBY GREENING,	} School-boys and orchard despoilers.
DICK PIPPIN,	
CHARLEY BALDWIN,	

SCENE. — *A Room in CRABTREE'S House. Table covered with white cloth, on which are candles burning, C. back. Two chairs R. and one chair L. of table. Arm-chair R. C.*

Enter ADAM, R., with a steel trap in his hand, and a musket under his arm, followed by MR. MEEK.

Adam. Tell yer it's no use talkin'; I'm a goin' to give them mischievous chaps a pepperin', jest as sure as my name's Crabtree. Moral suasion, as you call it, parson, may be purty good preachin'; but when yer come to find yer best apples agoin' night arter night, somethin' a leetle more powerful in the way of argument is wanted. This old shootin'-iron and that ere trap'll make more converts to the truth than honesty's the best policy, than all the sermons you ever writ or preached.

Mr. Meek. No, no, Brother Crabtree; depend upon it, you are wrong in your treatment. You'll excuse my plain speaking, but you have gained a hard name among the boys. If one casts an admiring glance at your apples from the road, he is assaulted with a torrent of threats, if not by a shower of stones. If a party of them stop in front of your door on their way to school, you rudely burst upon them, horsewhip in hand. You commenced wrong, brother, before they ever entered your grounds; by your harshness you made enemies of them. I know something of boys, brother. They are full of fun, and frolicsome as kittens, if you are gentle with them; but if you brush the hair the wrong way, look out for squalls.

Adam. I tell yeou, parson, they're a thievish set, and I'll riddle some on 'em with buckshot afore I git through with 'em, yeou see ef I don't.

Mr. Meek. Nay, nay, Brother Crabtree, don't say thieves. It's only the love of fun that brings them to your orchard. There's not one of them but what could have his fill of apples at home. Treat them kindly, and I'll answer for the safety of your fruit.

Adam. Neow look a here, parson. I believe I pay jest as much for preachin' as the biggest man in this ere teown. But all I want fur my money is what I git Sunday. Preachin's jest like baked beans — once a week is all a man wants. So don't yeou go ter meddlin' in my secular affairs.

Mr. Meek. It is my business, Brother Crabtree, to settle all quarrels which may arise in my parish. And here's a very foolish one between you and the school-boys, which I mean to heal. You wish to save your apples — do you not?

Adam. Of course I do ; and if them air boys comes here to-night, as I know they will —

Mr. Meek. Do as I advise, and 'twill be their last visit. You and your man watch, and if they come, seize them and bring them into the house.

Adam. Well, I don't object to that ; and when I git 'em here, I'll wallop —

Mr. Meek. No ; treat them with the utmost kindness. Do not allude to the business which brought them here. Spread your table with some delicacies, give them the best you have, call it a surprise party, and invite them to come again. Thus, in the language of Scripture, you will be “heaping coals of fire upon their heads,” and your kindness will work a cure where your musket will fail.

Adam. “Coals of fire !” Is that ere Scriptor, parson ?

Mr. Meek. It certainly is.

Adam. Well, I never. That's what I should call going over to the enemy. Couldn't do it.

Mr. Meek. Try it, brother, try it. If the result does not prove me right, I will not only withdraw my objections to the buckshot, but will join you, with a good stout cudgel, and assist in driving away the depredators.

Adam. Well, I declare, that idee tickles me mightily. Yer sure it's Scriptor, parson.

Mr. Meek. You'll find it in Proverbs, brother.

Adam. Well, I always did believe in Scriptor. I've a good mind to try it, parson.

Mr. Meek. Do, neighbor ; you will not regret it.

Adam. Yes, parson, I remember, “If your enemy hunger, give him bread, and so heap coals of fire onto

his head." That is good Scripter. Here's my hand, parson. I'll try your remedy ; but if that fails, you jine me —

Mr. Meek. Heart and soul, Brother Crabtree. It's very dark to-night. You'll have a chance to try our method of preserving apples. Good by. I'll drop in soon, and see how it works. [*Exit, R.*]

Adam. Good by, parson. Neow he's a raal good soul, an awful fine man, and he knows Scripter tew. (*Puts the gun in R. corner back.*) I s'pose I've been kinder harsh with the school chaps. (*Puts trap in L. corner back.*) I'm an old bach ; never had any boys to take care on, and so I s'pose I don't know the breed as I orter. Here, Phil, Phil ! Where on airth is that critter ?

Phil. (*Outside, L.*) Aisy, aisy. Bedad, I'm a coom-ing, jist. (*Enter, L.*) And was yer spakin', Mr. Crabtree ?

Adam. To be sure I was, you numbskull.

Phil. I ax yer pardon ; but me mimory's failin' ; I was in doubt —

Adam. What is there in the house to eat ?

Phil. Ate, is it ? Well, there's the cat to ate, and a cowl'd turkey to be atin', barrin' what the cat has stolen.

Adam. I don't mean that. Is there anything in the way of pastry ?

Phil. Pastry, is it ? There's the cowl'd cabbage and the cowl'd praties.

Adam. No, no. Pies, cake — anything of that sort.

Phil. Begorra ! there's the big apple-dowdy in the oven — the finest iver yer smilt.

Adam. Just the thing ! How near done is it ?

Phil. Riddy at the call, sighin' and singin' wid it's swateness, like a purty girl awaitin' for her beau.

Adam. Hark ye, Phil. I'm going to try a new way to rid myself of the varmints who plunder my trees.

Phil. So I would. Give them a taste of the contints of that stale barrel in the corner.

Adam. No; I shall not try that. I'm going to put "coals of fire" on their heads, Phil. Do you hear? Coals of fire.

Phil. O, murther! Frizzle the brains of the darlints! (*Aside.*) Bedad, who'd think that ould heathen would turn out a *friar*? (*Aloud.*) Coals iv fire! Ye'll niver go for to be doin' that, Mr. Crabtree.

Adam. Pshaw! I'm speaking meta—meta—ahem—*metaphysically.*

Phil. Meta— which is it?

Adam. Well, no matter. 'Tain't jist the word, I guess. You'll find out in time. What I want to say now is this: when yer hear the boys climbing over the wall, run out, catch as many as yer can, and drag 'em in here. Do yer understand?

Phil. To be sure I do. Run out, catch out, and drag out.

Adam. Hark! What's that?

Phil. Whist, whist! it's the villains craping by the door.

Adam. Then go, quick—

Phil. Bedad, I'm after thim! [*Exit, R.*]

Adam. And I'm after you. Lively, Phil, lively!

[*Exit, R.*]

Phil. (*Outside.*) Arrah, my honey! I have yez!

Bobby. (*Outside.*) Quit! I ain't a doin' nothin'.

Phil. (Outside.) That's thrue for yez, honey. It's I that's doin'. Aha, yez scamp!

Dick. (Outside.) Ow! my arm, my arm! Lemme go!

Phil. (Outside.) To be sure I will. Go along wid me. (*Enter, R., dragging DICK and BOBBY.*) There yez are, my b'ys, jist as snug as a flay in an Irishman's jacket.

Enter CRABTREE, R., dragging CHARLEY.

Charley. O, Mr. Crabtree! please, I won't do so any more.

Adam. Phil, let go. (*Releases CHARLEY.*)

Phil. Scoot, yez spalpeens. (*The boys all run into L. corner front, and try to hide behind each other, pushing and crowding in terror.*)

Adam. (Rubbing his hands and grinning.) Well, my young friends, my dear young friends, you thought you would surprise the old man, did yer? But I heard all about it. Coming to make me a visit. Oho, you rogues! Well, I'm glad to see you, and I'll make yer have a nice, pleasant time — won't I, Phil?

Phil. That's thrue for yez, Mr. Crabtree. (*Aside.*) A rid-hot time.

Adam. Now, make yourselves comfortable, boys, make yourselves comfortable, while I see what I can find to treat you on. Phil, set out the table; we'll have a feast! aha, a feast, boys! [*Exit, L.*]

(*PHIL sets out the table, smoothes the cloth, watching the boys all the while, then, standing behind the table, with his hands resting on it, speaks.*)

Phil. Ah, well, yez poor, forsakin' arphaus, it's little

yez fathers and mithers know av the sad fate that's awaitin' yez. Ye'll be cut off in the flower av yez youth. O, musha! ye thaves! ye'd stale apples — would ye? ye would. Did iver ye rade Misther Fox's Book of Howly Marthers? av the power fellers tied up by the two thumbs av 'em, wid niver a fut av ground ferninst the soles av 'em? O, will, will, 'twould be consolin' to yez, ye dear, delightful, murtherin', thavin' villains, yez, and the rid-hot cowls they briled themselves on so comfortably! It's well yer spacheless. Ye'll stale no more apples, yez blackguards. [Exit, L.

(The boys all rush over to the R., try the door, find it locked, then come down C.)

Dick. Darn you, Bob Greening! See what a scrape you've got us inter, now.

Bob. 'Twan't me, Dick Pippin. I didn't want ter come. I don't like apples, anyhow: they allers give me the colic.

Dick. Tell yer you proposed it. You said, "Let's go to old Crabtree's." And now you want to shift it on ter somebody else.

Bob. Tell yer I didn't. I said, "Let's go down the road and take a walk." And you said, "Let's git over the wall." And I said —

Charley. O, come, boys; don't quarrel. We've got into a scrape, and we are all to blame. So, let's put our heads together, and find the quickest and easiest way of getting out of trouble.

Dick. I say, Charley, what do you s'pose the old man's going to do?

Bob. Something dreadful, I know, he talks so very nice.

Charley. That's just my idea, boys. I don't like his looks. He's always been such a cross, savage old fellow, that this change means no good to us. He's trying to deceive us.

Dick. Good gracious! s'pose he's gone for a cowhide!

Bob. Or a big bull-dog! Dear me! I wish I was home!

Charley. Well, don't cry, "Baby," whatever comes. Stand by me, and I'll get you out of the scrape. Hallo! see that gun in the corner!

Dick. (*Goes up and looks at it.*) It's loaded and capped.

Bob. And there's a big trap in the other corner.

Dick. Hark! somebody's coming. (*They all run into L. corner, as before.*)

Enter CRABTREE, L.

Adam. Ah, looking round? That's good. Make yourselves at home, make yourselves at home.

Dick. (*Aside.*) I wish I could.

Bob. (*Aside.*) You won't catch me out another night!

Charley. Hush! Keep still, and do just as I do.

Adam. (*Draws a chair up, and seats himself behind the table.*) Come, draw up here, boys, and I'll give yer something nice. I do like boys. Come, don't be bashful; come right along. (*CHARLEY takes a chair, draws it up, and sits R. of table; BOB and DICK take chairs, and seat themselves L. of table, watching CHARLEY.*) Neow, that's what I call raal cosy. Here, Phil, bring in the crockery. And now what shall I call you? (*To CHARLEY.*)

Charley. Charley.

Adam. Charley? Well, that's a good name. I had a brother called Charley, once. And what's your name, sonny? (*To DICK.*)

Dick. Dick.

Adam. Dick? That's a nice name. I've got a horse that I call Dick. And what's your name, bub? (*To BOB.*)

Bob. Bob.

Adam. Bob? Why, that's the name of my donkey. Ain't much bigger than yeou, nuther. Where on airth's that crockery? Phil!

Phil. (*Outside.*) Can't yez be aisy wid yez howling. (*Enter, L., with plates on his arm, and a napkin in his hand. — Aside.*) Bedad, there's the three little morthers assimbled about the alther, and there's the high praste a grinning like a faind, that he is. Faith, now, it's considerate to dale gently wid them first, and for that same raisin I've hit the plates hot.

Adam. Come, come! don't you see my guests are impatient?

Phil. Ah, will, will, I'm a cooming. (*Takes a plate with his napkin, and hands it to DICK, who snatches at it, drops it on the floor, and shakes his fingers, with a howl.*)

Adam. (*Jumping up.*) You little scamp! Ah — ah — my dear boy, never mind, never mind. It's only a plate.

Phil. That's thrue for yez, honey. (*Gives a plate in the same manner to BOB, who drops it, with a howl.*)

Adam. (*To BOB.*) You careless scamp! — ah — I mean —

Phil. My dear b'y, it's only a plate, jist. (*Offers a*

plate to CHARLEY, who looks up at him with a smile, then takes the corner of the table-cloth, receives the plate, and places it on the table.) Begorra, a faine b'y that. (Places a plate in front of ADAM, then plates before DICK and BOB, knives and forks at each plate.)

Adam. Now, then, bring in the apple-dowdy! Do you hear that, boys! an apple-dowdy, piping hot. I had it baked on purpose for you.

Phil. (*Aside.*) The owld sinner! He's full of the decate. Begorra, I've got a fine bed av live coals awaiting for these same little thaves.

Adam. Now, then, Phil, why don't you start?

Phil. I'm agoing. — (*Aside to ADAM.*) Will I bring in the — the — you know what I mane, too.

Adam. Bring in the dowdy at once. D'you hear?

Phil. To be sure I do. Do yez think I'm dafe?

[*Exit, L.*

Adam. Well, boys, I repeat, I'm right down glad you came to-night. It's kinder lonesome for an old man; and this is raal kind in you to come. I'll try and pay yer fur it.

Dick. (*Aside to BOB.*) With a horsewhip, I s'pect.

Bob. (*Aside to DICK.*) Or the big dog.

Adam. How slow that Phil is! I declare, I am so impatient to get at that dowdy, I can't wait. Keep your seats, and I'll hurry up Phil.

[*Exit, L.*

Dick. I tell yer, boys, this is an awful scrape.

Bob. Did you see his eyes glare?

Dick. That confounded Irishman burnt us on purpose.

Bob. Look at my hand. It's all blistered!

Dick. I know what's coming next. We're going to be poisoned!

Bob. O, dear! what shall we do?

Charley. Do? Keep still. Watch me, and do as I tell you. When I cry, "Now, boys," you, Dick, grab that trap, and set it in the passage there. (*Points L.*) You, Bob, run for that door. (*Points R.*) Here's the key under the table-cloth. I'll get the musket and cover the old man. We'll see if three smart boys can't get themselves out of a scrape. There's some fiery torture preparing for us. That Phil mentioned something about hot coals. Hush! somebody's coming. Mind! quiet, quiet!

Enter CRABTREE, L.

Adam. Here it comes! here it comes! (*Sits.*)

Enter PHIL, L., with a pan-dowdy, a ladle laid across it, places it on the table, in front of CRABTREE, and stands behind his chair.

Adam. Ah, now for a glorious feast! a glorious feast! (*Takes up the ladle, and drops it with a howl of pain.*)

Phil. Aisy, my b'y; it's only a ladle.

Adam. You blundering scamp, what does this mean, heating up everything in this manner? If I wanted anything particularly hot, you never would do it.

Phil. Ah, but indade I would. — (*Aside.*) He manes the hot coals. Poor innocents! the dowdy will scald them inside, and the cowls shave their heads as bald as babbies'. Ah, will, the way av the transgrisser is mighty hard, intirely. He'll want the coals nixt, and I'll go for 'em. [*Exit, L.*]

Adam. Now, Master Charley, hold your plate, and I'll give you some of the best apple-dowdy you ever tasted. (*CHARLEY points at the dish, then slowly points*

to his mouth, and shakes his head, with a sigh.) What! you won't try it? Well, Master Dick, let's have your plate. (*DICK performs the same pantomime.*) What! you, too, refuse? Why, it's the nicest dish you ever ate. Well, then, Master Bob, your plate. (*BOB imitates DICK and CHARLEY.*) Well, I never! three boys that can't eat. What on airth does this mean? (*All three again perform the same pantomime, and ejaculate in chorus.*) Poison!

Adam. (*In a rage.*) What! after attempting to steal my apples, you young scamps; after my kindness to yer, taking yer inter my house, do yer dare to insult my victuals by calling them poison! You bold, unblushing young whelps! What do yer say to this?

Charley. Just this, Mr. Crabtree. Now, boys! (*DICK jumps up, seizes the trap, and sets it at L. entrance, then runs to R. BOB runs to R. CHARLEY seizes the musket, runs in front of the other boys, and points it at CRABTREE.* Now, boys, unfasten that door, quick!

Adam. Put down that gun! put down that gun. (*Jumps up on chair.*) It's loaded. It might go off.

Charley. So it might, Mr. Crabtree, and if it did, 'twould serve you right.

Adam. Here, Phil, Phil! I shall be murdered! Quick! Quick!

Phil. (*Outside, L.*) I'm here, Mr. Crabtree, with the hot cowls.

Enter PHIL, L., with a shovel of blazing coals. (A little blazing alcohol is best.) He steps into trap.

Phil. O, murther! murther! I'm kilt, intirely. I've put my fut in it, shure. O, murther! murther!

Charley. Yes, caught in your own trap. Mr. Crabtree, you're a villain!

Adam. Phil, what are you doing with that fire?

Phil. Shure, it's the cowls. O, murther, my uncle is broke intirely.

Adam. The coals? What do you mean?

Phil. Shure, didn't I hear yez say yez was going fur to put cowls av fire on the heads of the thaves that stole yez apples.

Dick. The door's open, Charley.

Charley. Old Crabtree, I thought you was a cross, mean man, but I never would have believed you could be so cruel. Good by. Eat your dowdy; we want none of it; and we will take good care to let the whole town know how cruel you can be. Come, boys, let's go.

Adam. Here, stop. It's all a mistake, I tell you.

Phil. Bedad, this trap's no mistake; it sticks like a poor man's plaster.

Charley. It's no use, Mr. Crabtree. You're a humbug.

Dick. A precious swindle.

Bob. A pious fraud.

Boys. (*In chorus.*) Good by, old Crabtree. (*About to exit, R. They are met by MR. MEEK, who enters.*)

Mr. Meek. One moment, boys. (*They fall back, looking sheepish.*) Who's a humbug, swindle, and fraud?

Phil. If yez plase, Mr. Meek, it's my masther.

Adam. Well, Mr. Meek, I've tried your hot-coal dodge, and it's a failure.

Mr. Meek. What, do I hear aright? Have you treated the boys kindly?

Adam. I should think I had. There's the best I had

in the house, which they refuse to touch. It may be Scripter, but it don't work here.

Mr. Meek. Let me understand the situation. Boys, I found Mr. Crabtree was to salute you, when you came to steal his apples, with a charge of buckshot. I induced him to try the effect of a little kind treatment; to bring you into the house and treat you to the best he had, assuring him that the boys would appreciate his kindness, and trouble his apples no more.

Charley. What! Was all this really meant for us?

Adam. Of course it was.

Charley. Then we have made fools of ourselves, boys. Why, that Irishman abused us like pickpockets, and we thought the whole arrangement was to decoy us to some fearful punishment.

Phil. Bedad, I was only preparing thim for the torture.

Adam. You blasted fool! So you have been deceiving the boys — have you?

Phil. Begorra, didn't yez say yez was goin' to put cowls av fire on the heads av 'em with yer tarkin', and tarkin', and tarkin', shure?

Mr. Meek. Ah, I see where the trouble is. Let me make it right. Boys, Mr. Crabtree wishes to protect his apples, and make friends of you all, and, in proof of his desire to gain your friendship, invites you to partake of this tempting dish. You know me, boys, and know I always tell you the truth. What say you? Will you accept his hospitality?

Charley. Gladly, Mr. Meek; and I will say, for these boys and myself, that we will never trouble his apples again. He has given us a fright, and we have misunder-

stood him. Suppose we call it square, Mr. Crabtree, shake hands, and be friends.

Adam. To be sure, to be sure. Here you are, Charley, Bob, Dick. (*Shakes hands with each.*) You stand by me, and I'll stand by you. I have misunderstood you; but I'll be a boy again, and learn how boys should treat each other. Forgive and forget.

Phil. (*Who has got out of the trap.*) The cowls are cowl'd, the dowdy's cowl'd, and there's nothing hot in the house, except my leg, and that's shivering. Murther! how it burns!

Adam. Well, come to the table, and we'll have a pleasant time, after all. But I'm rather afraid, thanks to that blundering Phil, that my "Coals of Fire" didn't work according to Scripter.

Phil. Bedad, it's all owing to yez mitty — mitty — what yez call it? Bad luck to it.

Charley. Don't say that, Mr. Crabtree, for your kindness makes us regret that we ever stole your apples.

Mr. Meek. No, Brother Crabtree, you have shown a kindly heart; our boys here have discovered that stealing apples is no very honorable employment; I have settled the only quarrel in my parish; peace is declared, and friendship formed by the warmth of your Coals of Fire, and I call them a decided success.

[*Curtain falls.*]

SANTA CLAUS' FROLICS.

A CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT FOR LITTLE FOLKS.

[*The rising of the curtain discloses room, with a fireplace, c., on either side or above which are hung stockings of various sizes, from the baby's little sock to Bridget's long and broad red, blue, or black hose. On the right of the fireplace is the Christmas tree, hidden by a curtain, which is so arranged that it may be easily removed (or, if double parlors are used, or the entertainment is given in a hall or vestry, the tree can be placed in one corner of the audience-room, and while the attention of the auditors is diverted by the entertainment in the other room, or upon the platform, the tree can be lighted). Six or eight children in the scene, arrayed in night dresses and caps, with lighted candles in their hands, moving about, and occasionally looking up chimney.*]

SONG. — Air, "We're all Noddin'."

Girls.

We're all waiting, wait, wait, waiting,
We're all waiting for Santa Claus to come.
To catch him we're waiting; he'll surely be here;
The moments fly quickly, and midnight draws near.

All.

We're all waiting, wait, wait, waiting,
We're all waiting for Santa Claus to come.

Boys.

We're all freezing, freeze, freeze, freezing,
We're all freezing, here, waiting in the cold ;
For Santa to bring us our presents we wait ;
Come, hurry, old fellow ; 'tis really quite late.

All.

We're all freezing, freeze, freeze, freezing,
We're all freezing, here, waiting in the cold.

Girls.

We're all nodding, nod, nod, nodding,
We're all nodding, and dropping off to sleep ;
To our warm little beds 'tis time we should go ;
Come, hurry, good Santa ; pray don't be so slow.

All.

For we're all nodding, nod, nod, nodding,
For we're all nodding, and dropping off to sleep.

Boys.

We're all yawning, yaw, yaw, yawning,
We're all yawning ; so let's go off to bed.

Girls.

To stay any longer we're surely unwise ;
We'll wait for the daylight to open our eyes.

All.

For we're all yawning, yaw, yaw, yawning.
We're all yawning, and going off to bed.

[*Exeunt, R. and L., repeating the last two lines.*

Santa Claus peeps out from chimney, then enters. Costume, rubber boots, with pants tucked into them; heavy fur coat, with red comforter tied about it; red comforter about his neck; peaked fur cap; long gray hair and beard; very red face; strapped to his back a large basket, filled with toys.

Santa (looking R. and L.).

Ho, ho, my little rogues. You set a trap
To catch me napping; *now* who takes the nap?
I'm an old schemer; even your sharp eyes
Could never find me in this queer disguise.
Dream on, my darlings, while I treasures heap.
Ho, ho! to fill your *hose* while you're asleep.
Year after year, I drop in on the sly,
Through chimneys made for me so broad and high;
To pop down them is made my cheerful duty;
It *suits* me too — sometimes, almost too *sooty*.

(Takes basket off back.)

Let's see: what year is this? why bless my eyes,
It's 1872. — Good Gracious! how time flies!
And children multiply so fast, 'tis clear,
A partner I must have another year.
I'm really getting old. This wrinkled phiz
Of good old age a striking symbol is.
And yet I'm strong, can frolic, dance, or play
With young folks yet for many a Christmas day.
So I'll not grumble; while I can, I'll strive
To let my boys and girls know I'm alive.
What though my hair is gray, my heart is young,
And green as Christmas boughs around me hung.

SONG. — Santa Claus. Air, "*Captain Jinks.*"

I'm Santa Claus, the Christmas king,
And every year I gayly sing,
Ho, boys and girls, to you I bring
Such lots of Christmas Presents ;
A clipper sled, for merry Ned,
For merry Ned, for merry Ned,
A waxen doll, for pretty Poll,
You'll find among my treasures.

(*Spoken.*) But, bless you, I don't sing very loud, for I know that "Little pitchers have big ears," and I wouldn't have them hear me for the world. Ah, many and many a time I've heard a soft voice in the middle of the night, cry out, "Who's there?" Ah, ha! Then I creep about softly, and sing very low, —

I'm Santa Claus, &c.

The boys and girls in me delight,
In me delight, in me delight ;
They hang their stockings in the night
To wait my midnight coming.
With generous store I fill them all,
I fill them all, I fill them all ;
With generous store I fill them all,
And creep off in the morning.

(*Spoken.*) For, bless the dear little rogues, they're only half asleep. Wouldn't they like to catch me! But no, no, I'm away up the chimney, and when morning comes I peep in, and hear them cry, "Why, who has

been here, and left these beautiful presents?" Ah, ha!
then I sing, —

Why, Santa Claus, the Christmas king,
Who every year doth gayly sing, &c.

(Children sing outside.)

We're all dreaming, dream, dream, dreaming,
We're all dreaming that Santa Claus has come.

Santa.

Dream on, my darlings, unto each of you
Morn shall bring joy; your dreams shall all be true.
Here are the stockings; bless me, what a row!
Little and big, they make a wondrous show.

(As he speaks he fills stockings.)

First comes the baby's; what a tiny thing!
'Twill just hold a rattle and a rubber ring;
This is a girl's, so very neat and small;
I'll stuff it with candy, and a pretty doll.
Ah! here's a boy's. It's very strong and blue.
A nice new pair of skates, my lad, for you;
Another girl's. What can I find to please her?
Ah, here's a tea set; don't think that's a *teaser*.
Another boy's! Ho, this will never do, —
Hole in the heel; a present would drop through;
A ball of yarn will make him wiser grow;
'Twill mend his stocking and his habits too.
What monster's this? It must be Bridget's, sure;
'Twould hold all I have brought, I fear much more.
A nice new gingham dress — a good warm shawl —
Don't fill it — then here goes a waterfall.

And now I'm off. (*Sees audience.*) Hallo! whom
have we here?

I really am found out; that's very clear.

Now don't expose me, for I did not mean

Upon my annual visit to be seen.

If you are all my children, 'tis not fair

To tell my secrets even to the air;

So keep them close; don't whisper I've been here;

And shut your eyes; I'm going to disappear.

With "Merry Christmas" wishes all I greet,

Hoping next year my visit to repeat.

And now good night — I'm off. Yet ere I go,

A little magic I propose to show.

Shut fast your eyes a minute — one, two, three.

Presto! change! Behold the Christmas tree.

(The Christmas tree is suddenly disclosed. Santa Claus approaches it, and distributes presents.)

A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE.

CHARACTERS.

FRED and LIZZIE.

Enter LIZZIE, L., and FRED, R.

Fred. Dear Lizzie, I've torn a hole in my jacket.

Lizzie. No matter. I've my needle and thread here, and I'll soon mend it.

Fred. O, no! I can't stop; the boys are waiting for me to make up a game of base ball. It's no consequence.

Lizzie. O, yes, it is. Remember the old saying, "A stitch in time saves nine."

Fred. Do you believe that, Lizzie?

Lizzie. To be sure I do, and I'll prove it while I am mending your jacket. (*Sews while they are speaking.*) Didn't mother send you somewhere when you left the house?

Fred. Dear me, Lizzie! she sent me to Mrs. Dobson, and I forgot all about it. I must go right away.

Lizzie. Stop a moment; I haven't finished. Didn't father send you to the store for something?

Fred. O, dear! what a ninny I am! He wants corn for the horses right away. I must go at once.

Lizzie. Stop, stop. How did you succeed with your music lesson?

Fred. I declare, I forgot it.

Lizzie. You didn't forget to water the flowers?

Fred. Yes, I did, though.

Lizzie. Why, Fred; I shouldn't wonder if you forgot to feed the canaries.

Fred. I did, Lizzie, just as sure as you are alive.

Lizzie. You've learned your lesson for to-morrow?

Fred. No, I haven't.

Lizzie. Brought in the kindlings for Mary?

Fred. No.

Lizzie. O Fred! my buttons you were to get from the store?

Fred. Forgot them.

Lizzie. Well, no matter, if you did not forget the thread for aunt Jane.

Fred. But I did, Lizzie; I wanted to join the boys in a game of ball, and forgot everything.

Lizzie. There, Fred, your jacket is mended.

Fred. Thank you, Lizzie.

Lizzie. It was a very small hole, but by having it mended you have saved nine stitches.

Fred. Nine stitches! How?

Lizzie. By having it mended now, there is no danger of its growing larger, and requiring more work to mend it. Then there's the message to Mrs. Dobson, one; father's corn, two; the music lesson, three; watering the flowers, four; feeding the canaries, five; your lesson for to-morrow, six; the kindlings for Mary, seven; my buttons, eight; aunt Jane's thread, nine; all of which

you had forgotten, and which you will now do, thus saving yourself nine stitches of pain, which you would have felt had you neglected them.

Fred. I'm glad I stopped. I should have been sorry. I shall remember, after this, that—what did you say the old saying was?

Lizzie. “A stitch in time saves nine.”

[*Exeunt.*]



THE RED CHIGNON.

(FOR FEMALE CHARACTERS ONLY.)

CHARACTERS.

MISS PRISCILLA PRECISE,	{	Principal of a genteel Boarding
		School for young Ladies.
HETTY GRAY,	}	Pupils.
FANNY RICE,		
LIZZIE BOND,		
HANNAH JONES,		
MRS. LOFTY,		a fashionable Lady.

SCENE. — *Parlor in MISS PRECISE'S Establishment.*
Piano R., Lounge L., Chairs C.

Enter HETTY, FANNY, and LIZZIE, R., laughing.

Hetty. O, such a fright!

Fanny. Such a stupid!

Lizzie. I never saw such a ridiculous figure in the whole course of my life!

Hetty. I should think she came from the backwoods.

Fanny. Who is she, any way?

Lizzie. She's the daughter of the rich Mr. Jones, a man, who, three years ago, was the proprietor of a very small saw-mill away down east. He managed to scrape together a little money, which he invested in certain rail-

road stocks, which nobody thought would ever pay. They did, however, and he has, no doubt to his own astonishment, made a great deal of money.

Hetty. And that accounts for Miss Precise's partiality. Well, I'm not going to associate myself with her; and I mean to write to father this very day, and tell him to take me home. She dresses so ridiculously!

Lizzie. And talks so horribly!

Fanny. And plays so wretchedly!

Hetty. O, girls, don't you think I caught her at the piano this morning playing Yankee Doodle and whistling an accompaniment!

Fanny. Whistling!

Lizzie. Good gracious! what would Miss Precise say. If there's anything she forbids, it's whistling.

Hetty. Yes, and such a reader! I heard her reciting Longfellow's Excelsior; and such reading, and such gestures! (*Recites.*)

“The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an All-pine village past —”
(*All laugh.*)

Fanny. O, it's ridiculous!

Lizzie. And then her dress! O, girls, I've made a discovery!

Fanny. What is it? What is it?

Hetty. O, do tell us!

Lizzie. Well, then, you must be secret.

Fanny and Hetty. Of course, of course!

Lizzie. Well, yesterday, at just twelve o'clock, I was in the hall; the door-bell rang; I opened it; there was a box for Miss Hannah Jones; I took it; I carried it to her room; I opened —

Fanny and Hetty. The box?

Lizzie. The door; she wasn't there. I put it on the table; it slipped off; the cover rolled off; and such a sight!

Fanny. What was it?

Hetty. O, do tell us!

Lizzie. Four — great — red —

Fanny and Hetty. What? What?

Lizzie. Chignons!

Hetty. Chignons? Why, Miss Precise has forbidden our wearing them.

× *Fanny.* O, it's horrible!

Lizzie. Ain't it? And I did want one so bad!

Hetty. But she cannot wear them.

Lizzie. We shall see! Now comes Miss Precise's trial. She has taken Hannah Jones because her father is rich. She worships money; but if there is anything she hates, it is chignons. If she can stand this test, it will be the best thing in the world for us. Then we'll all have them.

Hetty. Of course we will.

Fanny. But I don't like the idea of having such an interloper here. She's no company for us.

Enter MISS PRECISE, L. She stands behind the Girls with folded arms.

Hetty. Indeed she isn't! I think Miss Precise is real enough to allow her to stay.

Fanny. Better go where she belongs — among

Lizzie. pray, whom are you consigning to the hands of these young ladies?

Hetty. Good gracious!

Fanny. O, dear! O, dear!

Lizzie. O, who'd have thought! (*They separate,*
HETTY and FANNY, L., LIZZIE, R., MISS PRECISE, C.)

Miss P. Speak, young ladies; upon whom has your dread anathema been bestowed?

Lizzie. Well, Miss Precise, if I must tell, it's that hateful new pupil, Miss Jones. I detest her.

Fanny. I can't abide her.

Hetty. She's horrible!

Lizzie. So awkward!

Fanny. Talks so badly!

Hetty. And dresses so ridiculously!

Lizzie. If she stays here, I shan't!

Fanny. Nor I.

Hetty. Nor I.

Miss P. Young ladies, are you pupils of the finest finishing-school in the city? Are you being nursed at the fount of learning? Are you being led in the paths of literature by my fostering hands?

Lizzie. Don't know. S'pose so.

Miss P. S'pose so! What language! S'pose so! Is this the fruit of my teaching? Young ladies, I blush for you!—you, who should be the patterns of propriety! Let me hear no more of this. Miss Jones is the daughter of one of the richest men in the city, and, as such, she should be respected by you.

Lizzie. She's a low, ignorant girl.

Miss P. Miss Bond!

Hetty. With arms like a windmill!

Miss P. Miss Gray!

Fanny. A voice like a peacock!

Miss P. Miss Rice!

Hetty, Lizzie, and Fanny. O, she's awful!

Miss P. Young ladies! I'm astonished! I'm shocked! I'm thunderstruck! Miss Jones is my pupil. She is your associate. As such, you will respect her. Let me hear no more of this. Go to your studies. I highly respect Miss Jones. Imitate her. She's not given to conspiracies. She's not forever gossiping. Be like her, and you will deserve my respect. To your studies. Miss Jones is a model for your imitation. [*Exit, L.*

Hetty. Did you ever!

Fanny. No, I never!

Lizzie. A model for imitation! Girls, we'll have some fun out of this. Imitate Miss Jones! I only hope she'll put on one of her chignons. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HANNAH JONES, R., extravagantly dressed, with a red chignon, followed by MRS. LOFTY.

Hannah. Come right in, marm; this is our setting-room, where we receive callers. Take a seat. (*MRS. LOFTY sits on lounge.*)

Mrs. Lofty. Will you please call your mistress at once?

Hannah. My mistress? Law, neow, I s'pose yeou take me for a hired gal. Yeou make me laugh! Why, my pa's richer than all the rest of 'em's pas put together. I deon't look quite so scrumptious as the rest on 'em, p'r'aps, but I'm one of the scholars here.

Mrs. L. I beg your pardon. No offence was intended.

Hannah. Law, I don't mind it. Yeou see our folks come from deown east, and we haven't quite got the hang of rich folks yit. That's why I'm here to git polished

up. Miss Precise is the schoolmarm; but she's so stiff, I don't expect she'll make much of me. I do hate airs. She makes the girls tend to door, because she's too poor to keep help.

Mrs. L. Will you please speak to her? I have not much time to spare, as this is my charity day.

Hannah. Charity day! Pray, what's that?

Mrs. L. I devote one day in the week to visiting poor people, and doing what I can to alleviate their misfortunes.

Hannah. Well, marm, that's real clever in you. I do like to see rich folks look arter the poor ones. Won't you please to let me help you? I don't know the way among the poor yit, but I'm going to find out. Here's my pocket-book; there's lots uv money in it; and if you'll take and use it for the poor folks, I'll be obleeged. (*Gives pocket-book.*)

Mrs. L. O, thank you, thank you! you are very kind; I will use it, for I know just where it is needed. Can you really spare it?

Hannah. Spare it? Of course I can. I know where to git lots more; and my pa says, 'What's the use of having money, if you don't do good with it?' Law, I forgot all about Miss Precise. You just make yourself to home, and I'll call her. [*Exit, L.*]

Mrs. L. A rough diamond. She has a kind heart. I hope she'll not be spoiled in the hands of Miss Precise. (*Opens pocket-book.*) What a roll of bills! I must speak to Miss Precise before I use her money. She may not be at liberty to dispose of it in this wholesale manner.

Enter MISS PRECISE, L.

Miss P. My dear Mrs. Lofty, I hope I have not kept you waiting. (*Shakes hands with her, then sits in chair, C.*)

Mrs. L. O, no; though I'm in something of a hurry. I called to ask you if you could take my daughter as a pupil.

Miss P. Well, I am rather full just now; and the duties of instructor are so arduous, and I am so feeble in health —

Mrs. L. O, don't let me add to your trials. I will look elsewhere.

Miss P. No, no; you did not hear me out. I was going to say I have decided to take but one more pupil.

Mrs. L. What are the studies?

Miss P. English branches, French, Italian, German, and Spanish languages, and music; all taught under my personal supervision.

Mrs. L. Quite an array of studies; almost too much for one teacher.

Miss P. Ah, Mrs. Lofty, the mind — the mind is capable of great expansion; and to one gifted with the power to lead the young in the flowery paths of learning, no toil is too difficult. My school is select, refined; nothing rough or improper is allowed to mingle with the high-toned elements with which I endeavor to form a fashionable education.

Mrs. L. I should like to see some of your pupils.

Miss P. O, certainly. You will take them unawares; but I flatter myself you will not find them unprepared. (*Strikes bell on piano.*)

Enter FANNY, dressed as before, but with a large, red chignon on her head.

Miss P. This is Miss Fanny Rice. Mrs. Lofty, Fanny. There you see one of my pupils who has an exquisite touch for the piano, a refined, delicate appreciation of the sweetest strains of the great masters. Fanny, my dear, take your place at the piano, and play one of those pieces which you know I most admire. (*FANNY sits at piano, plays Yankee Doodle, whistling an accompaniment.*) What does this mean? (*Turns and looks at FANNY, starts, puts her eye-glass to her eye. — Aside.*) Heavens! that child has one of those horrible chignons on her head! — (*Aloud.*) Miss Rice, why did you make that selection?

Fanny. (*Imitates HANNAH'S manner of speaking.*) Cos I thought you'd like it.

Miss P. "Cos"? O, I shall die! And why did you think I should like it?

Fanny. Cos that's the way Hannah Jones does.

Miss P. Send Miss Gray to me. (*Follows FANNY to door.*) And take that flaming turban off your head. I'll pay you for this! [*Exit FANNY, L.*

Mrs. L. Your pupil is exceedingly patriotic in her selection.

Miss P. Yes; there's some mistake here. She's evidently not on her good behavior.

Enter HETTY GRAY, L., with red chignon.

Ah, here's Miss Gray. Mrs. Lofty, Miss Gray. She has a sweet voice, and sings sentimental songs in a bewitching manner. Miss Gray, take your place at the piano, and sing one of my favorites.

(HETTY sits at piano, plays and sings.)

“ Father and I went down to camp
Along with Captain Goodin,
And there we saw the boys and girls
As thick as hasty-pudding.”

Miss P. Stop! (*Looks at her through eye-glass.*)
She's got one of those hateful things on too — chignons!
Is there a conspiracy? Miss Gray, who taught you that song?

Hetty. Miss Hannah Jones, if you please.

Miss P. Go back to your studies, and send Miss Bond to me. (*Takes her by the ear, and leads her to the door.*)

Hetty. Ow! you hurt!

Miss P. Silence, miss! Take off that horrid head-dress at once. [*Exit HETTY, L.*]

Mrs. Lofty, how can I find words to express my indignation at the conduct of my pupils? I assure you, this is something out of the common course.

Enter LIZZIE, L., with red chignon.

Here is one of my smartest pupils, Miss Bond. Mrs. Lofty, Miss Bond. She particularly excels in reading. Miss Bond, take a book from the piano and read; something sweet and pathetic! something that you think would suit me.

LIZZIE takes a position, L., opens book, and reads, in imitation of HANNAH'S voice.

Lizzie. What is it that salutes the light,
Making the heads of mortals bright,
And proves attractive to the sight?
My chignon.

Miss P. Good gracious! is the girl mad?

Lizzie. What moves the heart of Miss Precise
To throw aside all prejudice,
And gently whisper, It is nice?
My chignon!

Miss P. Chignon, indeed! Who taught you to read in that manner?

Lizzie. Hannah Jones.

Miss P. O, this is too bad! You, too, with one of these horrid things on your head? (*Snatches it off, and beats her on head with it.*) Back to your room! You shall suffer for this! [*Exit LIZZIE, L.*]

Mrs. L. Excuse me, Miss Precise, but your pupils all wear red chignons. Pray, is this a uniform you have adopted in your school?

Miss P. O, Mrs. Lofty, I'm dying with mortification! Chignons! I detest them; and my positive orders to my pupils are, never to wear them in the house.

Hannah. (*Outside, L.*) Wal, we'll see what Miss Precise will say to this.

Enters with a red chignon in each hand, followed by LIZZIE, HETTY, and FANNY.

Miss P. Good gracious! More of these horrid things!

Hannah. Miss Precise, jest look at them! Here these pesky girls have been rummaging my boxes, and putting on my best chignons that pa sent me only yesterday. Look at them! They're teetotally ruined!

Miss P. Why, Miss Jones, you've got one on your head now!

Hannah. Of course I have. Have you got anything to say against it?

Miss P. O, no ; only it don't match your hair.

Hannah. What of that? Pa always goes for the bright colors, and so do I.

Lizzie. Miss Precise, I thought pupils were forbidden to wear them.

Miss P. Well, yes — no — I must make exceptions. Miss Jones has permission to wear them.

Lizzie. Then I want permission.

Hetty. And so do I.

Fanny. And so do I.

Miss P. First tell me what is the meaning of this scene we have just had.

Lizzie. Scene? Why, didn't you tell us to take Miss Jones as a model for imitation? Haven't we done it?

Miss P. But Miss Jones doesn't whistle.

Hannah. Whistle? I bet I can. Want to hear me?

Miss P. No. She don't sing comic songs.

Hannah. Yes, she does.

Lizzie. Yes, and she wears chignons. As we must imitate her, and hadn't any of our own, we appropriated hers.

Miss P. Shame, shame! What will Mrs. Lofty say?

Mrs. L. That she rather enjoyed it. I saw mischief in their eyes as they came in. And now, girls, I'm going to tell you what Miss Jones does that you *don't* know. A short time ago she placed in my hands her pocket-book, containing a large roll of bills, to be distributed among the poor.

Lizzie. Why, isn't she splendid?

Hetty. Why, she's "mag."

Fanny. O, you dear old Hannah. (*Kisses her.*)

Mrs. L. I'm going to send my daughter here to school, and I shall tell her to make all the friends she can ; but her first friend must be Hannah Jones.

Hannah. Well, I'm sure, I'm obleeged to you.

Lizzie. O, Miss Precise, we are so sorry we have acted so ! Let us try again, and show Mrs. Lofty that we have benefited by your instruction.

Miss P. Not now. If Mrs. Lofty will call again, we will try to entertain her. I see I was in the wrong to give you such general directions. I say now, imitate Hannah Jones — her warm heart, her generous hand.

Mrs. L. And help her, by your friendship, to acquire the knowledge which Miss Precise so ably dispenses.

Lizzie. We will, we will.

Miss P. Only, ladies, avoid whistling.

Hetty. Of course, of course.

Miss P. And comic songs !

Fanny. O, certainly.

Lizzie. And there is one more thing we shall be sure to avoid.

Miss P. What is that ?

Lizzie. The wearing of red chignons.

[*Exeunt.*

USING THE "WEED."

(FOR FEMALE CHARACTERS ONLY.)

CHARACTERS.

MISS BETTY BOOKWORM, Principal of a Young Ladies' School.

MARY JAMES.

FANNY YOUNG.

CLARISSA HARLOWE SMITHERS.

MISS PAULINA SMITHERS, } Guardians of Clarissa, twins,

MISS ROBERTA SMITHERS, } about thirty-five.

MRS. STARCH, Miss Bookworm's Assistant.

SCENE. — *Room in MISS BOOKWORM'S house, C. Sewing Machine, at which is seated CLARISSA. MARY seated, R., embroidering. FANNY seated, L., crotcheting. Arm-chair R. C., with small table beside it, on which is a bell.*

Mary. I declare, Clari, you will wear yourself out at the sewing machine.

Fanny. Your devoted attachment to that useful but tiresome instrument is really surprising.

Clarissa. Law, girls, I shall never tire of it. You know it is a novelty to me.

Fanny. Novelty! Why, I imagined there was not a family in the world without one.

Mary. Mother has had one ever since I can recollect.

Fanny. The idea that a young lady, with such a romantic name as Clarissa Harlowe Smithers, should become such a devoted slave to the needle and treadle is very surprising.

Mary. It's past belief.

Clarissa. Romantic! There's nothing about me romantic except my name, and I'm not to blame for that. You must know, girls, that I lost my father and mother when I was very young; and in the distribution of property occasioned by their decease, I fell to the lot of a couple of spinster aunts. I believe my name was originally Clara; but by them I was rechristened, and made to answer to the absurd name of Clarissa Harlowe. The old fussies!

Mary. Meaning your respected guardians.

Fanny. Who, I believe, are twins.

Clarissa. Yes, indeed; the *twinnest* of twins. O, you would laugh to see them. They dress alike, walk, move, and talk alike. It is fun to plague them! I should so like to have been present when they read my last letter!

Fanny. And, pray, what was there in that to plague?

Clarissa. One little sentence that will make them fidget, I think. I told them that I had just learned to use the weed.

Fanny. What!

Mary. You don't mean to say that you use tobacco?

Clarissa. Of course not. How stupid you are! Can't you understand? I meant the "Weed Sewing Machine."

Fanny. O, is that all?

Mary. Gracious! How you would shock Miss Bookworm with such language!

Clarissa. Not more than I did my guardians. How I should like to have seen them as they read that sentence!

Enter MRS. STARCH, L. She is very straight and prim; walks in smart, gives a military salute, and speaks short and jerky.

Mrs. Starch. Miss James, — Miss Young, — Miss Smithers. — Attention! — Orders of the day. — Needles till ten; — books till twelve; — lunch till one; — walk in the garden till five; — and — don't touch the gooseberries. (*Salutes, turns, and exit, R.*)

Mary. Poor Mrs. Starch —

Fanny. What a walking tombstone to the memory of her dead and gone husband!

Clarissa. The dear departed was a soldier, I believe.

Mary. Yes; what in the army was called a martinet, although he was but a private. She was obliged to learn and practise the tactics of a soldier, and, as you see, the old habit still clings to her.

Enter MISS BOOKWORM, R. The other characters rise.

Miss Bookworm. (*Very affected.*) Young ladies, the swiftly-moving hand that marks upon the dial the progress of time, now rests, with airy touch, upon the hour of ten. To your books. (*MARY and FANNY go R., CLARISSA L.*) One moment pause. It is my humble task to twine, I trust with no unskilful hands, the tendrils of your youthful minds about the massive pillars of wisdom — to train you in those graceful and delightful ways that make the young and lovely a — a — a — I mean “a thing of beauty and a joy forever.” It is my

especial desire that you should be graceful in deportment and choice in language, for it is my proud boast that no pupil of mine ever made use of a single unladylike expression. Remember, I trust implicitly in you. You may go.

Mary. (To FANNY.) Isn't that beautiful?

Fanny. (To MARY.) O, it's jolly. If you only like it. [Exit, R.

Clarissa. (Aside.) I'm going to have some of those gooseberries, if I die for it. [Exit, L.

Miss B. (Sitting in arm-chair.) Beautiful creatures! It is such a privilege to guide their tender steps! (I wonder why Mr. James don't send the money for Mary's last quarter!) So congenial to my cultivated taste to nurture these youthful aspirations! (If Mr. Young doesn't pay up more promptly, I shall send that girl straight home.) So sweet, so tender, so respectful! (Looks off, R.) I declare! Miss Smithers is picking off gooseberries. (Touches bell.) The forward, impudent minx.

Enter MRS. STARCH, L., salutes.

Starch!

Starch. (Saluting.) Marm.

Miss B. Didn't I tell you to have an eye on those gooseberries?

Starch. Yes, marm — did. Two eyes, marm.

Miss B. And yet I see Miss Smithers devouring them. O, Starch! Ungrateful Starch!

Starch. Never, marm! — Shoulder broomstick! — March! — Garden. — Charge Smithers! — Save gooseberries. (Salutes.) [Exit, L.

Miss B. O, this is too much, after my watchful care,

to be thus betrayed! That girl shall be charged for those gooseberries in the very next bill.

Enter STARCH, L., with a broom.

Starch. Smithers — in full retreat—mouth full of gooseberries.

Miss B. Do not let this occur again, Starch; remember! [*Exit, R.*]

Starch. Yes, marm. (*Salutes; shoulders broomstick, and about to march off, L., when enter MISS PAULINA and MISS ROBERTA, L.; they are dressed precisely alike, rather old-fashioned; each with an umbrella and a band-box.*)

Starch. (*Presenting broom.*) Halt! Who goes there?

Miss Paulina. Goodness gracious!

Miss Roberta. Gracious goodness!

Miss P. It's a grannydeer.

Miss R. It's a centenary.

Starch. Speak! Who are you? What do you want?

Miss P. Miss Bookworm!

Miss R. Miss Bucknam!

Starch. Sit down — call her — eyes right! 'bout face! March! [*Turns, and exit, R.*]

Miss P. Roberta!

Miss R. Paulina!

Miss P. That are thing's a lunatic!

Miss R. Stark, staring crazy!

Miss P. To think that our child — our darling Clarissa —

Miss R. Harlowe —

Miss P. Smithers should be in such a place as this! Roberta, I smell a pipe! It's horrible!

Miss R. I smell tobacco! Vile tobacco! It's awful!

Miss P. To think that we should have been so deceived in Miss Bookworm, after the high recommendations she gave us!

Miss R. And the stifkits, and the recipes, and the prescriptions advertised!

Miss P. I shall never have no more confidence in human nature.

Miss R. No; all my hopes of the critter is blasted.

Miss P. We must take her away from this place.

Miss R. Yes, cart her off home again.

Miss P. Here comes the deceitful thing! Calm yourself, Roberta, and let us meet her with the scorn she merits. (*Sits, R.*)

Miss R. Yes, indeed; I brought my umbaril on purpose. (*Sits, L.*)

Enter MISS BOOKWORM, R., followed, by STARCH.

Miss B. Good morning, ladies; you are welcome to this sequestered spot, where learning meditates.

Miss P. (*Aside.*) Fiddlestick's end! What palaver!

Miss R. (*Aside.*) Gracious! there's that centenary again!

Miss B. (*Takes arm-chair and sits, C.; STARCH behind her chair.*) To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit? (*Miss R. and Miss P. look straight before them, and do not answer.*)

Starch. (*Very loud.*) Attention! Company!

Miss P. (*Starting.*) Mercy!

Miss R. (*Starting.*) Gracious!

Miss B. Starch! Ladies, your business with me! Your names, if you please.

Miss P. Miss Paulina Smithers.

Miss R. Miss Roberta Smithers.

Miss B. The guardians of our dear Clarissa Harlowe.

Miss P. Dear Fiddlesticks!

Miss R. Dear Humbug!

Starch. Gooseberries!

Miss B. Starch!

Miss P. So, madam, your fine recommendations are a deceit.

Miss R. Your recipes a vain delusion.

Miss P. You call this a finishing school — do you?

Miss R. The grove of learning, hey?

Miss P. Where young ladies are taught graceful accomplishments.

Miss R. And crotchit, and darning, and picklehomini painting.

Miss B. What do you mean, ladies? You bewilder me. It is my proud boast that everything which belongs to the polite arts is taught in this establishment.

Miss P. Including the use of the weed.

Miss R. Pipes and tobacco, sugarettes and mere shams.

Miss B. Pipes, weed — what do you mean!

Miss P. That you are found out. Didn't we, too confiding guardians of Clarissa Harlowe Smithers, place her in your charge for instruction?

Miss R. And didn't you charge outrageously for it?

Miss B. I have taken Miss Smithers into my school, where she is being reared in the most tender manuer.

Miss R. Tender manner! Look at this letter! (*Producing letter.*) See what she writes: "Among the many accomplishments taught by Miss Bookworm, I have

learned to use the weed." Ain't you ashamed of yourself?

Miss B. Miss Paulina —

Miss R. Yes, you wicked woman, we've found you out; and we've come to take our dear Clarissa Harlowe away from your horrid school.

Miss B. Miss Roberta —

Miss P. and Miss R. (Together) O, don't try to palaver!

Miss B. I do not understand you. Do you mean to tell me that one of the pupils of this refined and accomplished school penned that sentence.

Miss P. Here it is.

Miss R. In black and white.

Miss B. I will investigate this at once. (*Strikes bell.*) There is some mistake, be assured.

Enter, R., MARY and FANNY; L., CLARISSA.

Clarissa. Why, aunt Paulina! (*Runs towards her.*)

Miss P. (Points her umbrella at her.) Stand back, deceitful child!

Clarissa. (Turns, and sees Miss R.) And Aunt Roberta too. (*Runs towards her.*)

Miss R. (Points her umbrella.) Stand back, you naughty, naughty girl!

Clarissa. Why, what is the meaning of this?

Mary. Your relatives don't seem glad to see you, Clari.

Fanny. Ask them to take off their things, Clari.

Miss B. Miss Smithers, I am grieved to say you stand before me as a culprit. The tears well up to my eyes as I say it.

Miss P. Hem! crocodile tears.

Miss R. Don't snuffle; it don't become you.

Miss B. I am mortified that a pupil of mine should have the bad taste to indite so vulgar a sentiment as that which you sent to your respected relatives.

Clarissa. And pray, may I inquire what it was?

Miss B. You told them, in that letter, that you had learned to use — I cannot speak the word — that you had learned to use the — the — it really brings the blush of shame to my cheeks — the — the —

Starch. (*Very loud.*) The weed!

Miss P. (*Starting.*) Goodness gracious!

Miss R. (*Starting.*) Gracious goodness!

Mary. O, Clari! How could you?

Fanny. O, Clari! Who would have thought it?

Clarissa. (*Aside.*) O, isn't this fun! (*Aloud.*) Miss Bookworm, with contrition I do confess I did write that sentence.

Miss B. Unhappy child!

Clarissa. And I must make the further confession that it was by your own commands I learned to use the weed.

Miss B. You wicked girl!

Miss P. I knew it! I knew it! O, you deceitful thing!

Miss R. You good-for-nothin'! I'll break my umbaril on your head!

Miss P. And so will I. 'Twill serve you right.

(*Both advance to Miss B., with uplifted umbrellas.*)

Starch. (*Stepping between, with uplifted broom.*) Home guard, to the rescue!

Clarissa. Stop! My good aunties, before you use your weapons, listen to another confession. What I have learned to use, I have learned to love.

Miss P. The poor, misguided girl!

Miss R. She's as crazy as that soldier woman.

Clarissa. And you shall love it too. It is the jewel of industry, the pearl of great price. (*Points c.*) Look at it. The "Weed Sewing Machine."

Miss B. What do I hear?

Miss P. What! And there ain't no pipes and tobacco?

Miss R. Nor mere shams and sugarettes?

Clarissa. Ah, aunties, I caught you napping this time! Could you think that your own darling, who remembers, with a grateful heart, your kind care and attention, could be guilty of anything worse than a very poor pun?

Miss P. Clarissa!

Miss R. Clarissa Harlowe!

Miss P. and Miss R. Clarissa Harlowe Smithers!

Clarissa. Well, aunties.

Miss P. Come right here and kiss me.

Miss R. And me too, before I blubber.

(*Clarissa kisses both.*)

Clarissa. Miss Bookworm, I must ask your forgiveness for my folly.

Miss B. You have it, my child, though you have given me a terrible fright. For you know there is nothing that I condemn more in my pupils than such expressions as you have made use of. Do not repeat it again.

Clarissa. I will try, Miss Bookworm; but you know there is nothing I like so much as a good joke.

Starch. Yes, there is.

Clarissa. Ah, indeed! Well, Starch, what is it?

Starch. Gooseberries.

Mary. O, Clari, have you been at the gooseberries?

Fanny. Without letting us know! That is too bad.

Miss B. Young ladies!

Miss P. Well, Roberta, what shall we do? We've had a tramp up here for nothing.

Miss R. Well, Paulina, we'll have to take our band-boxes and our umbarils, and tramp home again; that's all.

Miss B. No, ladies; be my guests for a few days. It will be a pleasure to me to show you the perfect working of my school — the harmony which prevails, the proficiency of my pupils, and their correct and polished manners.

Clarissa. O, do, aunties! I'll show you all over the place; and we'll have such a splendid time! — won't we, girls?

Fanny. Yes, indeed; you must stay, ladies.

Mary. We'll do our best to make your stay pleasant.

Clarissa. Yes, aunties, and when you are tired with sight-seeing, I'll show you how I found happiness.

Miss P. How was that, Clari?

Clarissa. In learning to use the weed.



A LOVE OF A BONNET.

(FOR FEMALE CHARACTERS ONLY.)

CHARACTERS.

MRS. CLIPPER, a Widow.

KITTY, her Daughter.

AUNT JEMIMA HOPKINS, a little inquisitive

MRS. HORTENSIA EASTONE, very genteel.

DORA, her Daughter.

KATY DOOLAN, Irish Help.

SCENE. — *Room in MRS. CLIPPER'S House. Lounge, L.; Chairs, C.; Table and Rocking-chair, Looking-glass, R.*

Enter MRS. CLIPPER and KITTY, R.

Mrs. C. But really, Kitty, I cannot afford it.

Kitty. O, yes, you can, mother; just this once. It's such a love of a bonnet! it's so becoming! and it only costs fifteen dollars.

Mrs. C. Fifteen dollars! Why, child, you are crazy! We cannot afford to be so extravagant. The income derived from the property your dear father left will only allow us to dress in the most economical manner.

Kitty. But this bonnet is not extravagant. Dora

Fastone wears a bonnet which cost twenty-five dollars, and her father has failed five or six times. I don't see why I can't have a new bonnet as well as that proud, stuck-up —

Mrs. C. Hush, my child! never speak ill of our neighbors because they dress better than we do. If they spend money foolishly, we should endeavor to use ours to better purpose. I am sure I should be glad to gratify you, but we have so many expenses. Your music lessons cost a great deal of money; and your brother Harry, off at school, is really suffering for a new suit of clothes. I must send him some money to-day.

Kitty. O, he can wait; he's only a boy; and no one cares how he looks; but young ladies must dress, or they are thought nothing of. O, you must let me have the bonnet, mamma!

Mrs. C. If you have this bonnet, Kitty, Harry must go without his new suit.

Kitty. If you could just see it! It's such a love of a bonnet! Do let me run down and ask Miss Thompson to send it up for you to look at.

Mrs. C. I've no objection to that; and if you think you need it more than Harry does his new suit, why —

Kitty. You'll let me have it. That's a good, dear mother. I knew you wouldn't refuse. I'll run to Miss Thompson's. I won't be gone long. I suppose I am selfish; but then, mother, it's such a love of a bonnet.

[*Exit, L.*

Mrs. C. (*Sits in rocking-chair.*) Dear child, it is hard to refuse her! But one should be made of money to keep up with the extravagant fashions of the day.

Enter AUNT HOPKINS, R.

Aunt H. Angelina, what on airth have them air Joneses got for dinner? I've sot and sot at that air front winder till I've got a crick in my back a tryin' to find out whether it's lamb or mutton. It's something roasted, anyhow.

Mrs. C. Aunt Hopkins, you are very inquisitive!

Aunt H. Inquisitive! Law sakes, do hear the child talk! Neow, what harm kin there be in tryin' to find eout what your neighbors have got for dinner? I mean to put on my bunnet and run acrost and see. I know they've got apple dumplin's, for I see the hired gal throw the parin's out into the yard.

Mrs. C. Run across! Don't dream of such a thing!

Aunt H. Well, I'm a goin' up stairs to git my specs and have another good look, anyhow; for I'm jest dyin' to know whether it's lamb or mutton. Land sakes! what's the use of livin', ef you can't know how other folks live?

[*Exit*, R.]

Mrs. C. Aunt Hopkins! — She's gone! Dear me, she does worry me terribly! What will our neighbors think of us?

Enter KATY DOOLAN, L.

Katy. If you plase, mam, may I coome in?

Mrs. C. Certainly, Katy. What's the matter?

Katy. If you plase, mam, I have a letther; and would you plase rade it for me?

Mrs. C. (*Takes letter.*) Certainly, Katy. From your lover?

Katy. Indade, mam, I have no lover. It's my cousin, mam.

Mrs. C. O, your cousin. (*Opens letter.*) “Light ov my sowl!” Why, this cannot be your cousin.

Katy. Indade, indade, it be, sure! It’s only the in-sinivatin’ way he has, mam!

Mrs. C. (*Reads.*) “Bewitchin’ Katy! and how are ye’s, onyhow? I take my pin in hand to till ye’s I am yurs, in good hilt and sphirits; and its hopin’ ye’s the same, truly! The pulsitations uv my heart are batin’ wid the love I bears ye’s, darlin’ Katy! the fairest flower—niver mind the blot—that iver bloomed on the family tree uv Phil Doolan uv Tipperary, dead and gone this siven years, bliss his sowl,—and how are ye’s? An’ by the same token that I loves ye’s much, I sind by the ixpriss, freight paid, a new bunnit, which my cousin Biddy Ryan, for my dear love, have made for ye’s, charmin’ Katy Doolan! Wear it nixt ye’s heart! And if ye’s git it before this letther coomes to hand, ye’s may know it is from

Your ever sighin’,

Wid love for ye’s dyin’,

CORNALIUS RYAN.

P. S. If ye’s don’t resave this letther, sind me word uv mouth by the man who fetches the bunnit.” That’s a very loving epistle.

Katy. Pistol, is it? Faith, I thought it was a letther.

Mrs. C. And so it is; and a very loving one! Your *cousin* has sent you a new bonnet.

Katy. Is it in the letther, mam!

Mrs. C. It is coming by express.

Katy. Sure, he might sind it in the letther, and save expinse. What will I do?

Mrs. C. Wait patiently until the bonnet arrives.

Katy. Will Cornalius coome wid it?

Mrs. C. I think not. The expressman will bring it.

Katy. Sure, I don't want the ixprissman. It's Cornalius I want.

Mrs. C. This cousin of yours seems very affectionate. Are you going to marry him some day?

Katy. Some day? — yis, mam. He tould me, Would I? and I axed him, Yes. What will I do with the lettber, mam?

Mrs. C. Keep it with your treasures. It should be precious to you.

Katy. Faith, thin, I'll put it in the savings bank with my money. I'm obliged to ye's, Mrs. Clipper, mam. If you plase, what was that last in the lettber?

Mrs. C. "Your ever sighin',
Wid love for ye's dyin',
Cornalius Ryan."

Katy. O, don't, ma'am! Ye's make me blush wid the shame I fail. Och! it's a quare darlin', wid all his sighin', is Cornalius Ryan! Och, musha! it's an illigant lad he is, onyhow! [Exit, L.]

Mrs. C. So we are to have another new bonnet in the family! Well, Katy is a good girl, and I hope will get a good husband, as well as a new bonnet. [Exit, L.]

Enter AUNT HOPKINS, R., with a bandbox.

Aunt H. It's mutton! I was determined to find eout, and I have! I saw that air Jones boy a playin' in the street, and I asked him what his folks had got for dinner, and he said mutton; and neow I'm satisfied on that air p'int. I wonder what's in this 'ere bandbox! I saw that

express cart stop here, and the man said it was for Miss Kitty somebody; of course, Angelina's darter. I do wonder what it is! (*Opens box.*) Well, I declare! A spic span new bunnet! (*Takes out a very large, gaudily-trimmed bonnet.*) And sich a bunnet! Ribbons and lace, flowers and feathers! Now that's jest what I call a tasty bunnet! I mean to try it on. It'll jest suit my complexion. Law sakes! here comes Kitty! 'Twon't do to let her know I've been at her things! (*Puts bonnet back into box, and places it behind the table.*)

Enter KITTY, L.

Kitty. O, aunt Hopkins! where's mother?

Aunt H. Land sakes! I don't know no more than the child unborn!

Kitty. Dear me! Here are Mrs. Fastone and Dora coming up the steps! What shall I do?

Aunt H. Why, let 'em in, of course!

Kitty. Has my new bonnet come yet?

Aunt H. Indeed it has! And sich a beauty!

Kitty. O, I'm so glad! But where is it?

Aunt H. Down there behind the table. I hain't teched it; only jest took a peep.

Kitty. I'll let Miss Dora see that some people can dress as well as some other people. Aunt Hopkins, you must manage to draw attention to my new bonnet while the visitors are here, to give me an opportunity to show it.

Aunt H. Why, I'll take it right eout the fust thing.

Kitty. No, no! that would be too abrupt. Manage to speak of bonnets; but do not show it until they ask to see it.

Aunt H. Well, I guess I know heow to do it genteelly.

Enter KATY, L.

Katy. Two ladies to see you, miss. (*Crosses to R.*)

Kitty. Where's mother, Katy?

Katy. Gone to the butcher's, miss. [*Exit, R.*]

Aunt H. Butcher's? Wal, I do hope she'll git some mutton, for the Joneses has it; and we ought to be as genteel as our neighbors.

Enter MRS FASTONE and DORA, L., very elegantly attired.

Mrs. F. My dear child, how do you do?

Kitty. (*Shaking hands with her, and afterwards with DORA.*) I'm delighted to see you! Hope you are quite well, and Dora.

Mrs. F. Quite well — aren't you, Dora?

Dora. Quite, mamma.

Kitty. Pray be seated, ladies. (*They sit on lounge.*)
Mrs. Hopkins, Mrs. Fastone.

Aunt H. (*Steps over and shakes hands.*) Hope you are pretty well, ma'am, and you, too, miss, though you do look awful delicate! And how's your husband? He's a broker — ain't he? (*Sits in rocking-chair, and keeps it in motion.*)

Mrs. F. Yes, Mrs. Hopkins, Mr. Fastone is a broker, engaged day after day in the busy vortex of fluctuating enterprises.

Aunt H. Well, I never hearn tell of that business afore; but I s'pose it's profitable, or you couldn't afford to dress so. Is that a silk or a poplin you've got on?

Kitty. (*Brings her chair; sits, c.*) Aunt Hopkins! — Mother has stepped out to make a call.

Aunt H. No, she hain't; she's only gone to the butcher's.

Kitty. Aunt Hopkins! — Mrs. Fastone, what is the news?

Mrs. F. Well, really nothing. I am dying of *ennui*, the world is so quiet; no excitement to move the placid waters of fashionable society — is there, Dora?

Dora. Nothing, mamma.

Mrs. F. Nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to wear — is there, Dora?

Dora. Nothing, mamma.

Aunt H. Nothing to wear! Yes; there's bunnets.

Kitty. Aunt Hopkins! — Mrs. Fastone, you are quite correct.

Mrs. F. Mrs. Hopkins spoke of bonnets. I have been so disappointed! Thompson had a perfect love of a bonnet that I had quite set my heart upon for Dora; but it is gone, and the poor child is almost broken-hearted — ain't you, Dora?

Dora. Quite, mamma.

Kitty. I am very sorry, for bonnets are so hard to find. I have been very much perplexed about them myself. They are so very commonplace; no air of refinement about them.

Mrs. F. None, whatever — is there, Dora?

Dora. None, mamma.

Kitty. I've just had a new one sent home, but it doesn't suit me.

Aunt H. Why, Kitty, how you talk! It's a regular beauty!

Kitty. Aunt Hopkins! — It is not what I wanted, but Thompson said it was the most stylish she had.

Mrs. F. Thompson! Did you get it of Thompson?

Kitty. Yes, all my bonnets come from Thompson.

Mrs. F. Do let me see it!

Aunt H. (*Jumps up.*) I'll show it to you right off. It's an eligunt bunnet. (*Gets bandbox.*)

Kitty. Aunt Hopkins!

Aunt H. Neow don't aunt Hopkins me! for I'm going to show 'em jest how it looks on yer; set still; for if there's anything I pride myself on, it's showin' off a bunnet. (*Stands behind KITTY, puts the bonnet on her head, and ties it.*) There! ain't that a beauty?

Mrs. F. Why! what a hor — a handsome bonnet! Did you ever see anything like it, Dora?

Dora. Never, mamma!

Aunt H. That's the style, marm.

Mrs. F. Really! I want to know! And this is Thompson's most stylish bonnet! Really, how the fashions do change! Did you ever, Dora!

Dora. Never, mamma!

Kitty. (*Aside.*) I do believe they are laughing! Aunt Hopkins, I cannot get it off! You've tied it in a hard knot!

Mrs. F. It's very becoming — isn't it, Dora?

Dora. O, very, mamma.

Mrs. F. (*Aside to DORA.*) — What a horrid fright!

Dora. Frightful, mamma!

Mrs. F. I believe we must be moving, for I must hurry to Thompson's and order just such a bonnet for Dora. Good day. You have such a charming taste — hasn't she, Dora?

Dora. Charming, mamma! (*They bow, and exeunt, L., with their handkerchiefs to their mouths, endeavoring to conceal their laughter.*)

Kitty. Good day. Call again. — The hateful things! They are laughing at me. What ails this bonnet. (*Goes to glass.*) Goodness gracious! what a fright! This is not my bonnet. Aunt Hopkins, you've ruined me! I shall be the laughing-stock of the whole neighborhood. (*Tears off the bonnet.*)

Enter MRS. CLIPPER, R.

Mrs. C. Have the Fastones gone?

Kitty. I hope so. O, mother, send aunt Hopkins home; she's made me look ridiculous!

Aunt H. Well, I declare! this comes of trying to please folks!

Mrs. C. Is *that* your love of a bonnet, Kitty?

Kitty. No, indeed! Aunt Hopkins, where did you get this hateful thing?

Aunt H. Out of that bandbox.

Kitty. (*Takes up the cover.*) It's marked "Miss Katy Doolan." You've made a pretty mess of it!

Aunt H. Sakes alive! It's the hired gal's! Well, I never!

Mrs. C. But where's the bonnet you sent from Thompson's?

Katy. (*Outside.*) O, murder! that iver I should say this day!

Enter KATY, R., holding in her hand an elegant bonnet.)

The mane, stingy blackgurd has sint me this whisp of a buunnet, that I'll niver git on my head at all at all!

Kitty. That's my bonnet!

Katy. Is it, indade? and perhaps ye's be afther claiming the letther Cornalius Ryan sint wid it.

Mrs. C. No, no, Katy; there's a little mistake here. This is your bonnet.

Katy. Faith, now, isn't that a darling, jist! I'll wear it to church to-morrow, sure.

Kitty. Put it on now, Katy; and then take this wisp of a bonnet, as you call it, to Miss Thompson, with my compliments, and tell her I have decided not to keep it.

Mrs. C. Why, Kitty, I thought your heart was set upon having it.

Kitty. So it was, mother; but I shall never dare to wear it, after the ridiculous appearance I have just made. It's too fine for me. My conscience gave me a little twinge as I was coming home. Send Harry the money for his new suit. My old bonnet is quite good enough for me.

Aunt H. Neow that's what I call a self-denyin' gal. I'll fix it up for you; for if there's anything I pride myself on doin', it's fixing up old bunnets.

Kitty. And trying on new ones! No, I thank you, aunt Hopkins. Hereafter I'll look after my bonnets myself. I think our acquaintance with Mrs. Fastone will be broken off by this adventure; and so I will make a merit of necessity, abandon fashionable society, and be more humble in my demeanor and in my dress.

Mrs. C. Ah, my child, you will be better satisfied with your decision, as you grow older, and see how frivolous are the demands of fashion, and how little happiness can be obtained by lavish display. And I think this little adventure, though a severe lesson, will be far more profitable than the possession of that "love of a bonnet."



A PRECIOUS PICKLE.

(FOR FEMALE CHARACTERS ONLY.)

CHARACTERS.

MISS REBECCA PEASE.

MRS. GABBLE.

JENNY FROST,	} City girls on a vacation in the country.
BESSIE SNOW,	
SADIE BEAN,	

SISSY GABBLE.

JUNO, Miss Pease's colored help.

SCENE. — MISS PEASE'S *best room.* *Table, c., back.*
Chairs, R. and L. Sofa, L. Rocking-chair, c. Chair
directly in front of the table.

Enter, L., JUNO; costume, calico dress, handkerchief about
her head in shape of a turban, broom in her hand.

Juno. Bress my soul! Nebber see, in de whole co'se
ob my life, sich a galloping set as dem are city gals—
nebbber! For all de worl', jes like a flock ob sheep.
Shoo! away dey go, from de cellar to de top ob de
house—pell-mell inter de barn. Skipterty shoo, ober
de fields; skerspash into de brook; don't keer for nuffin
nor nobody. Can't keep de chairs straight, nor de flo'

clean, nor nuffin. (*Looks off, R.*) Now, now, now, jes look a dar! jes look a dar! See 'em scootin' round, chasin' dat are poor orphanless calf, what ain't got ne mudder. Never did see nuffin like it, nebber. (*Sweeps violently.*)

Jenny. (*Outside, R.*) Ha, ha, ha! If you don't stop, girls, I shall die.

Bessie. (*Outside, R.*) Ha, ha, ha! O, dear, there goes my hat!

Sadie. (*Outside, R.*) Ha, ha, ha! Do see him jump! [*All three enter, R., laughing.*]

Jenny. O, isn't this splendid! A country life for me.

Sadie Bessie. It's glorious! I could live here forever.

Sadie. So could I. No more city life for me.

Juno. Bres my soul! Goin' fur to stay here forebber! I'll jes' pack up my jewelry, and slope, for sartin'.

Jenny. Ah, there's Juno. O, Juno, isn't it most dinner-time? I'm so hungry!

Bessie. So am I—ravenous.

Sadie. I'm starving; slowly, but surely, starving.

Juno. Dinner! Why, bress my soul! yer hain't got yer breakfast digesticated yet. Well, I nebber, in de whole co'se ob my life, seed sich eaters—nebber. Six biscuit, four b'iled eggs apiece, and chicken; chicken by de dozen for dar breakfast; and now want dar dinner! Bress my soul! Doesn't yer git nuffin to eat in de city?

Sadie. O, yes, plenty; but not such biscuits as Juno makes.

Jenny and Bessie. Never, never!

Jenny. And eggs, girls! None cooked as Juno cooks them.

Bessie and Sadie. Never, never!

Bessie. And chickens! never so nice as those broiled by Juno.

Jenny and Sadie. Never, never!

Juno. Doesn't yers, honies? (*Grinning.*) Dat's mean; dat's raal mean. Well, poor dears, I s'pose yers is hungry. Now you jes' wait and see what Juno can find for a lunch. [*Exit, L.*]

Jenny. "A little *flattery*, now and then, is relished by the wisest men."

Bessie. And the darkest of our sex, Jenny.

Sadie. Yes; and "a *soft* answer turneth away wrath." O, ain't we having a splendid time, girls?

Jenny. How kind of our parents, after eight months' hard study, to send us to this delightful place!

Sadie. O, it's splendid. We want nothing better.

Bessie. No, indeed. There's nothing better than a hot city to be regretted.

Jenny. Stop. There is one thing.

Sadie and Bessie. What is it?

Jenny. One of mother's.

Sadie and Bessie. What is it?

Jenny. Yes.

peppery.

Sadie. Yes.

hot.

Jenny. Why, who in the world is this?

Sadie. What do you want, little girl?

Sissy. Mith Peath, if you pleath, if, if — Mith Peath, to home, my mother thed — my mother thed. What did my mother thed? O, my mother thed, if Mith Peath is to home, to give Mith Peath her com — her com — to give Mith Peath her com —

Jenny. Her compliments?

Sissy. Yith, ma'am, I geth tho; and tell Mith Peath, the thent her thome of her pickleth.

Sadie and Bessie. Pickles! O, you dear little thing!

Jenny. O, isn't she a darling! (*They all crowd round Sissy, take off her bonnet, kiss and hug her.*) Isn't she splendid?

I'll take the pail, little girl.

(*Putting pail behind her.*) Yith marm; I geth
 I muthn't give it to nobody but

off the cover, little girl. The

bleth never thpoil.
 do you like

Sissy. No, I don't. I want Mith Peath.

Bessie. Or some splendid gum drops?

Sissy. Ne. I want Mith Peath.

Enter MISS PEASE, L.

Miss P. And here she is, Sissy Gabble. What have you for me? (*The girls fall back in confusion, and whisper together.*)

Sissy. Thome pickleth, Mith Peath, my mother thent you, with her com — her com — her com —

Miss P. Her compliments, Sissy. I understand. I'm very much obliged to her for sending them, and to you, Sissy, for bringing them so carefully. Here, Juno!

Enter JUNO, L.

Juno. Yes, missis. Why, bress my soul! if dar ain't Sissy Gabble! Come right here, yer dear chile.

Miss P. Take her to the kitchen, Juno. Perhaps you can find a cake for her.

Juno. Guess I can, missis, sure for sartin. Come, Sissy Gabble, come right along wid Juno.

Sissy. Thay, Juno, who ith them? (*Pointing to girls.*)

Juno. Why, bress yer soul, dem ar's de young ladies from de city, on dar vex — vex — on dar vexation. O, Sissy, dar drestful sweet.

Sissy. Thweet, Juno? I thpothe tho; they've got thuch loth of candy. But they didn't git my pail, tho!

Juno. Come along to de kitchen. Come.

[*Exeunt JUNO and Sissy, L. The girls gather about' MISS PEASE.*]

Jenny. O, Miss Pease, I'm so glad Mrs. Gabble sent you those pickles, I'm so fond of them!

Bessie. Yes, Miss Pease; they're so nice!

Sadie. O, they're splendid! Do give us a taste.

Miss P. Stop, stop, young ladies. While I cannot but be grateful to Mrs. Gabble for her kindness, I wish it had taken some other shape. I have long been of the opinion that pickles are unwholesome, and have never allowed them to be placed upon my table. And I am sure I should be disobeying the instructions I received from your parents—to provide you only wholesome food—did I permit you to taste them. For the present, I shall leave them here. (*Places pail on the table.*) If you believe I have your interest at heart, you will not touch that which I have condemned. I know I can trust you. [*Exit, L.*]

Bessie. Well, I declare! The mean old thing!

Jenny. It's too bad! Nothing but blasted hopes in this world!

Sadie. Well, I don't care, I'm a going to have one of those pickles, if I die for it.

Jenny. Why, Sadie Bean, you don't mean it!

Sadie. Yes, I do. I know they *are* wholesome, and my mother always allows me to eat them.

Bessie. I wouldn't touch one for the world. How impolite it would be, after Miss Pease has forbidden it!

Sadie. No; she didn't forbid it. She said, if we thought she had our interest at heart, we wouldn't touch the pail. Now I don't believe she has, when she wants to deprive us of such a luxury. I'm determined to have a pickle.

Jenny. You are wrong, Sadie, to think of such a thing. A Precious Pickle you'll make. (*Sits on sofa.*)

Bessie. Nothing would tempt me. (*Sits on sofa.*) How can you, Sadie?

Sadie. Pooh! Cowards! It's just as easy as croquet, when you make up your mind. (*Lifts cover, and takes out pickle.*) A Precious Pickle. I'll taste, Jenny. Ain't they beauties?

Jenny. Quick, quick, Sadie; somebody's coming!

Sadie. Dear me! (*Claps on cover, runs and sits on sofa between JENNY and BESSIE.*)

Enter JUNO, L.

Juno. Bress my soul! dars Missis Gabble a runnin up de walk like all possessed. Speck her house afire, sure for sartin. [*Exit, R.*]

Sadie. (*Tasting pickle.*) O, ain't it nice! Bessie, run and get one.

Bessie. No, indeed; I shall do no such thing.

Jenny. O, Sadie, I wouldn't believe you could do such a thing.

Sadie. O, pshaw! It's all envy; you know it is.

Enter, R., JUNO, followed by MRS. GABBLE, who wears a calico dress, has her sleeves rolled up, her apron thrown over her head, and has altogether the appearance of having just left the wash-tub.

Mrs. G. Yes, Juno, poor Mr. Brown has shuffled off this mortal—what's its name? (*Looks at girls*) O, how do you do? I don't know how much he's worth, but they do say—Why, Juno, you've got a new calico—Fine day, young ladies.—They do say—Well there, I oughtn't to speak of it. Got your washing, Juno? I've been all day at that tub; and—Miss Pease? I can't stop a minute; so don't sit down. (*Sits in rocking-chair, and rocks* u

Juno. Yes, Missy Gabble, Missy Pease to home. Send her right up, sure for sartin. Bress my soul, how that woman do go on, for sartin. [*Exit, L.*]

Mrs. G. Ah, poor Mrs. Brown, with all them young ones. I wonder where my Sis is.

Jenny. I think she's in the kitchen, Mrs. Gabble.

Mrs. G. You don't say so? Stuffing herself, I'm sure. And poor Mr. Brown lying dead in the next house — and there's my washing waiting for soap — and there's Mrs. Jones hasn't sent my ironing-board home; and mercy knows how I'm to get along without it.

Enter MISS PEASE, L. During the dialogue between MISS PEASE and MRS. G., SADIE slyly eats her pickle, offering it to JENNY and BESSIE, who at first shake their heads, afterwards taste; the pickle is passed among them, and devoured before the conclusion of the conversation.

Miss P. Ah, Mrs. Gabble! I'm glad to see you. (*Takes chair and sits beside her.*)

Mrs. G. And poor Brown is gone!

Miss P. Mr. Brown dead? This is sad news.

Mrs. G. I should think it was — and there's Skillet, the butcher, chopped off his thumb — and Miss Pearson fell down stairs and broke her china sugar-bowl — spilt the whole set. As I told my husband, these expensive dishes never can be matched — and speaking of matches, Mrs. Thorpe is going to get a divorce. Jest think of it! I met her going into Carter's shop this morning. She said that pink muslin he gave her for a birthday present. My kins has got a new lot of them, only a shilling a yard. Speaking of yards, old Cooper tumbled into that

miserable well in his back yard this morning. They pulled him out — speaking of pulling, Miss Tibbet was in to the dentist's this morning for a new set of teeth. and — Have you seen my Sis?

Miss P. O, yes. She's in the kitchen with Juno. And, speaking of Sissy, reminds me that I must thank you for sending me —

Mrs. G. My pickles? Yes. Well, I'm glad you got 'em. But I didn't have a bit of good luck with 'em. And, speaking of pickles, O, Miss Pease, that villain, Smith, the grocer, has been taken up. He's going to be hung. Nothing can save him.

Miss P. Mr. Smith arrested! For what, pray?

Mrs. G. P'isoning! Jest think of it! And he a deacon in the church, and has such a splendid span of horses, and such an elegant beach wagon. I declare, the last time he took us to the beach I nearly died eating soft-shelled crabs; and my husband tumbled overboard, and Mr. Brown got sunstruck; and now he's gone! Dear me, dear me! And my washing ain't out yet.

Miss P. But tell me, Mrs. Gabble, what is it about the poisoning?

Mrs. G. Why, he or somebody else has been putting prussic acid in his vinegar, just at the time, too, when everybody's making pickles; and there's no end of the p'isoning he will have to answer for. Mrs. Jewel's just sent for the doctor, and Mrs. Poor's been dreadful all day, and Dr. Baldtop's flying round from house to house; and, O, dear — there's my washing! Who'll be the next victim nobody knows, I'm sure.

Sadie. (Jumping up.) O, dear! O, dear! Send for the doctor, quick! I'm dying, I know I am. (*Runs across stage and sinks into chair, R.*)

Miss P. (*Running to her.*) Bless me, child, what ails you?

Sadie. I don't know; I can't tell. The doctor, quick!

Mrs. G. Deary me, she's took sudden, just for all the world like Susan Richie.

Jenny. (*Jumping up.*) Water, water! Give me some water! I shall die if I don't have some water. (*Runs down and sinks into chair, L.*)

Mrs. G. (*Jumping up and running to her.*) Gracious goodness! here's another! It's something dreadful, depend upon it. When folks is took sudden —

Bessie. (*Jumping up.*) O, my throat! I'm burning up! Give me some ipecac. Quick, quick, quick! (*Runs round stage, then sinks into chair, C.*)

Mrs. G. There goes another! It's something dreadful, depend on it.

Miss P. What does this mean? Here, Juno, Juno! Quick!

Enter JUNO, L.

Juno. Here I is, Missy Pease.

Sadie. Run for the doctor, quick, Juno!

Juno. (*Running, R.*) Bress my soul! I'll fetch him.

Jenny. No, no! Get me some water — quick!

Juno. (*Running L.*) To be sure, honey; to be sure.

Bessie. No, no, Juno! some ipecac, or a stomach pump.

Juno. Pump, pump! Want de pump? I'll fotch it, I'll fotch it. Bress my soul, I'll fetch something. [*Exit, L.*]

Mrs. G. Well, if this ain't drefful! — washing-day, too — and the undertaker's jest as busy as he can be —

there never was so much *immortality* in this place, never. Poor critters! poor critters!

Miss P. Girls, what does this mean?

Sadie. O, Miss Pease, such agony!

Bessie. O, dear, what will become of me?

Jenny. O, this dreadful parching in the throat!

Mrs. G. O, I know it, I know it. I told my husband that something dreadful was a goin' to happen when he sold that colt yesterday.

Miss P. Sadie, what is the meaning of this. Your pulse is regular, your head cool, and your tongue clear.

Sadie. O, Miss Pease, it's those dreadful pickles.

Mrs. G. Yes, indeed, it is a drefful pickle—and so sudden, jest for all the world like poor Mr. Brown's sudden took, and these always seem to end fatally at some time or other— Dear me, dear me, and my wash—

Miss P. Pickles! Have you disobeyed me?

Sadie. I couldn't help it, Miss Pease; they looked so tempting. But I only took one.

Bessie. And I only tasted that.

Jenny. I only had one good bite.

Sadie. And we are poisoned!

Bessie. O, dear! poisoned!

Jenny. Yes, poisoned!

Miss P. How, poisoned?

Sadie. Mrs. Gabble says the vinegar was poisoned by Mr. Smith.

Mrs. G. Smith—vinegar—p'isoned! The land sakes! And I a good church member—and my washing—and poor Mr. Brown, tew. Well, I never! I'd have you to know that I bought no vinegar of Mr. Smith. I made my own.

Sadie. And your pickles were not poisoned?

Mrs. G. No, indeed. Never did such a thing in my life.

Sadie. O, dear! I'm so glad! (*Jumping up.*)

Bessie. I won't have the ipecac. (*Rises.*)

Jenny. My throat is decidedly better. (*Rises.*)

Enter JUNO with a pail of water and a dipper.

Juno. Bress my soul, de pump was fastened down so tight couldn't git it up. Here's a pail of water; if dat won't do, I'll git a tub.

Miss P. No matter, Juno. I think 'twill not be needed. Young ladies, I am very sorry —

Sadie. Please, Miss Pease, do not speak of it. I alone am to blame for transgressing your command, for such we should consider it, as you are for the present our guardian. Forgive me, and in future I will endeavor to control my appetite, and comply with your wishes.

Mrs. G. Well, I declare, I don't see the harm in eating pickles. My girls eat their weight in 'em, and they're just as sweet-tempered as —

Miss P. Their mother. Mrs. Gabble, it is not a question of harm, but of obedience, here. You see, the young ladies accept me as their guardian, and I only forbid that which I think their parents would not approve.

Mrs. G. And there's my washing in the suds! Where's my Sis.

Enter Sissy GABBLE, L., with a large slice of bread, covered with molasses.

Sissy. Here I ith, mother. Mith Peath thed I might have thumthin, and I like bread and 'latheth.

Juno. Bress my soul! dat are chile jest runnin' over with sweetness, sure for sartin.

Mrs. G. Yes; and the 'lasses running all over her clothes! Come, Sissy, let's go home. I'm sorry, Miss Pease, you don't like pickles; and I'm sorry, young ladies, they disagree with you. And I'm sorry, Miss Pease, I left my washing.

Miss P. Now don't be sorry at all, Mrs. Gabble. I'm always glad to see you. Your gift was well-intended, and the young ladies have suffered no harm, perhaps received a wholesome lesson.

Sadie. I think we have. I shall be very careful what I touch.

Jenny. O, dear! such a fright! I shall never get over it.

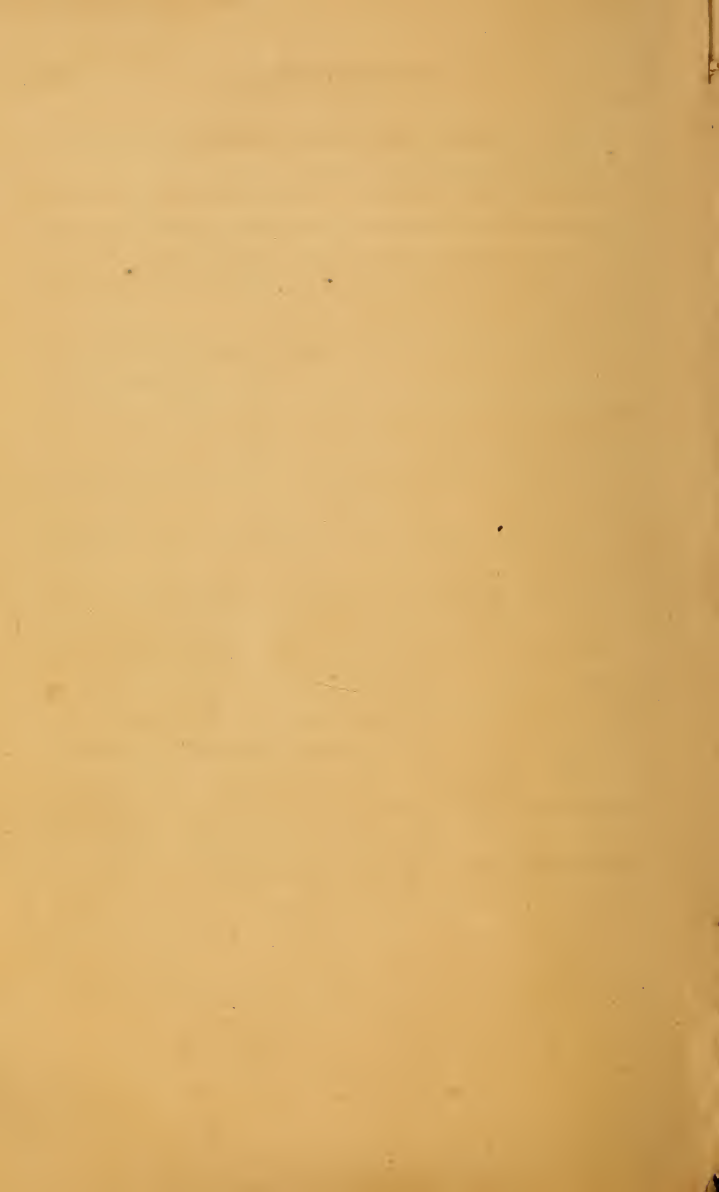
—*Bessie.* O, Sadie, you thought it was so nice!

Jenny. Yes, such a Precious Pickle!

Mrs. G. Of course it was. My pickles are the best made in town—precious nice, I tell you. Mrs. Doo-little always sends in for 'em when she has company; and the minister says they're awful soothing arter sermon.

Sadie. O, certainly; I've no doubt of it. But I've found that *stolen* fruit is not the sweetest, and that mischievous fingers make trouble when they clutch what mine sought, and *made* a Précious Pickle.

[*Curtain.*]



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